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Cormack-Aaron Slick from
Punkin Crick. 1919.

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BAKER, Hamilton Place, Boston, Mass.

Aaron Slick From Punkin Crick

A Clean Rural Comedy in Three Acts

By

LIEUT. BEALE CORMACK

Author of "The American Flag," etc.

NOTE

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Aaron Slick From Punkin Crick

WHO'S WHO

AARON SLICK, *not as green as he looks.*

MR. WILBUR MERRIDEW, *a crooked speculator.*

CLARENCE GREEN, *a mysterious young man.*

MRS. ROSY BERRY, *an Oklahoma widow.*

GLADYS MAY MERRIDEW, *a sweet young thing.*

THE GIRL IN RED.

LITTLE SIS RIGGS, *a regular tomboy.*

Hotel Guests.



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SYNOPSIS

ACT I.—Mrs. Berry's kitchen on an Oklahoma farm. Gladys May is chased by an awful cow. Merridew, the city slicker, meets his match in Sis, the tomboy. The downfall of Aaron Slick.

ACT II.—Same scene, later in the afternoon. The charming widow almost gets a proposal. Sis hides in the clothes basket. The mysterious Clarence Green who spouts poetry. Oil on the farm. Aaron triumphant.

ACT III.—A Chicago cabaret, a year later. The Girl in Red gets the best of Aaron—almost. Merridew in the toils of the law. "I'm so glad I could kiss a Dutchman—goin' back home, hurray!" Back to Oklyhomy.

Mid pleasures and palaces,
Though we may roam,
Be it ever so humble,
There is no place like home.

NOTES ON THE PRODUCTION

1. Advertise your play thoroughly. Get everybody talking about it. Keep the plot a secret, but let the town know that it is funny and that there is "something to it." Advertise with bills the fact that it is a *clean* rural comedy showing how the old farmer got ahead of the city slickers.

2. Select your cast to fit the characters as far as possible. Aaron, Merridew and Rosy should be middle-aged people, if possible. If not, cast young people for these parts who have mature looking faces. Powdered hair, lines on the face made with a soft pencil, spectacles, false hair, mustaches and whiskers securely stuck on with fish-glue add to the general effect.

3. Players should be drilled to speak naturally, but in a strong, clear voice that will carry to the rear of the hall. Avoid letting the voice drop on the last syllable of a sentence. Stand firm on the feet, do not shift them

around. Pause after periods and other marks of punctuation. Amateurs almost invariably rush a play through too fast. Take plenty of time for the business, pausing and looking around and at each other without speaking. Act naturally.

4. The properties are somewhat elaborate and they should be on hand for at least five rehearsals.

5. The costuming may be very simple or as elaborate as desired. The Girl in Red in the original performance wore a wonderful dress made of cheese-cloth covered with red mosquito netting and hat and bag to match. Rosy and Sis wear very fancy dresses in the third act. Gladys should be elaborately dressed all through the play. Sis wears her hair down in curls and short skirts in the first and second acts. She is supposed to be about fourteen years old.

6. No scenery is necessary, as only a room is required for the first two acts and screens and palms for the last act. A fireplace can be made with three black boards and brick tissue-paper such as is on sale at Christmas time. A window may be simulated by hanging a frame on rear wall and having lace or muslin curtains in front of it. Don't crowd the stage with furniture.

7. An orchestra adds to the effect, but a piano is all that is absolutely necessary. For the specialties in the last act make use of any available talent as suggested in the text at the beginning of Act III, but do *not* have any recitations, as these detract from the interest in the play plot.

8. Do not start rehearsals until your company is ready and you have at least eight or nine books of the play on hand. Director and stage manager should have books.

Aaron Slick From Punkin Crick

ACT I

SCENE.—*Kitchen in MRS. BERRY'S home on an Oklahoma farm. Plain interior setting with entrances R. (to other rooms) and L. to dooryard. For detailed explanation and elaboration of the stage setting see "Notes on the Production" in the Introduction. Dining table down L. set for supper with dishes, cutlery, castor, etc., and long white table-cloth that entirely conceals any one hidden under the table. Plain wooden chairs at table. Kitchen table down R. with cooking material on it, including implements for making dough. Comfortable wooden rocking-chair at c. Bright music, preferably some well-known rustic air, takes the curtain up, but ceases as soon as MRS. BERRY speaks.*

(When the curtain is well up enter MRS. BERRY from R., carrying a pan of corn. She crosses to L. door or window at rear.)

MRS. B. (*calling*). Pig, pig, pig, pig-ee! Pig, pig, pig, pig-ee! (*Throws some corn outside.*) One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight! Now, where's that other pig gone to? (*Calls loudly.*) Pig, pig, pig, pig-ee! (*Pause.*) If pigs ain't the dumbest animals; don't even know enough to come when I call 'em to feed. (*Pause.*) Oh, there you are at last, my lady. You must 'a' thought I was goin' to give you a special invitation. (*Throws corn out.*) That's right, fall all over yourselves tryin' to git in the trough. (*Pause, looking out.*) Look at 'em

eat. (*Pause.*) No wonder they're called pigs. (*Throws all the corn out.*) Now, where did I put them apple peelings? (*Comes to R.*) I know I had 'em. (*Sees them on kitchen table.*) Here they are. And them peas that Sis scorched fer dinner. (*Takes pan of peelings to door L.*) They'll make a nice dessert fer the pigs.

(*Throws peelings outside without looking out.*)

MERRIDEW (*outside*). Oh! What you trying to do? Drown me?

MRS. B. (*looks out of the door or window*). For the love of the land! If I didn't throw all them peelings and peas all over my summer boarder. (*Speaks to him outside.*) Oh, I'm awfully sorry. I didn't mean to do it, honest I didn't. Now you're all mussed up.

Enter MERRIDEW from L., peelings over his hat and shoulders.

MER. Say, what you think I am, a pig?

(*Comes down L. angrily.*)

MRS. B. (*down c.*). Oh, now, Mr. Merridew, you know it was a accident. I wouldn't 'a' had that happen for the world. Here, lemme take your hat. (*Takes it.*)

MER. (*brushing himself off*). Looks like you could see what you were doing.

MRS. B. (*brushing his hat*). Well, the pigs was all a-eatin' and, honest, I couldn't tell which was which. I didn't have my specs on.

MER. Madam, I want you to distinctly understand that I'm not a pig.

MRS. B. Oh, I understand that all right. Of course you're not.

MER. Have you made up your mind about the farm yet?

MRS. B. Well, not exactly. You see it's all so sudden, your offering to buy my place. I got to have time to think it over. Of course I'm anxious to sell, but twelve hundred don't seem very much.

MER. It's better than nothing, isn't it? You're not

making a cent. A lady can't run a farm by herself. Think, Mrs. Berry! You could move to the city and buy you a nice little place for twelve hundred dollars.

MRS. B. I've always wanted to live in the city.

MER. Certainly. You might buy a cow and have a little milk route. Lots of ladies do that.

MRS. B. But I want to be in society. I wouldn't have time to be peddling milk and be in society too, would I?

MER. Why, of course you would. You see, most of the society comes at night and the milk business would take up your morning hours. Twelve hundred dollars goes a long way in the city.

MRS. B. I dunno. Seems like I've heard things are powerful high in the city.

MER. Mere talk, mere talk, I assure you.

MRS. B. I'd love to be there, though. All my life I've wanted to be a city lady. My cousin Elmira she's rich. Had a little ten-acre lot up in the oil region of the state and it makes her over five hundred a month. And me with one hundred and eighty acres and not a drop of oil in the county.

MER. That's too bad. (*Carelessly.*) Never *was* any oil hereabouts, was there?

MRS. B. No. It's just my luck.

MER. Well, then, I suppose you are willing to sell your farm?

MRS. B. Oh, I'm willing all right, but it seems to me that I ought to get more'n twelve hundred for it, house and all.

MER. Twelve hundred is a fair price and it's my offer. You can take it or leave it. There ain't no one else after it, is there?

MRS. B. Yes there is.

MER. (*starts*). There is?

MRS. B. A man was looking at it only last week.

MER. Did he make you an offer?

MRS. B. Well (*pauses*), not exactly. He said he'd be back again.

MER. (*goes toward her*). Now, see here, Mrs. Berry, no one will give you more than I offer. You'd better settle the matter right up now.

MRS. B. You do hurry one so. I got to have time to talk it over.

MER. My niece and myself are going back to the city the day after to-morrow. If you want me to buy the place, just sell it now.

MRS. B. Wait till I talk to Aaron.

MER. Aaron? Who's Aaron?

MRS. B. Oh, he's a friend of mine. He lives over on Punkin Crick. I reckon he'll be comin' by this afternoon. He most always does on Thursdays.

MER. He ain't thinking of buying the place, is he?

MRS. B. Oh, no. He don't come to see the place. He comes to see me.

MER. Rich man?

MRS. B. No, Aaron ain't what you might call rich. He's got about sixty acres of bottom land along the crick.

MER. Well, if he's a good friend of yours, he'll advise you to take my offer.

MRS. B. What do you want to do with my farm, Mr. Merridew?

MER. (*starts*). Oh, I just want to get a little land in this section, that's all. Of course it isn't worth much, but my niece likes the place and we could come down here and spend our vacations.

MRS. B. A hundred and eighty acres is a pretty big place jest fer a vacation, ain't it?

MER. And then I might hold it for future use. I'm a speculator, you know.

MRS. B. Maybe I'd better speculate a little myself. Seems like I could hold it just as well as you.

MER. Yes, but it isn't bringing you in anything. You're losing money every season.

MRS. B. (*sighs*). Yes, that's so. A farm ain't no place for a woman who's all alone in the world. Oh, I wish I lived in the city.

MER. Well, now's your chance. Come, you'd better accept my proposition.

MRS. B. Yes, maybe I think I had.

MER. (*eagerly goes to her*). I've had a deed of sale all made out. See, here it is. (*Produces it.*) All you have to do is to sign your name right there.

(Points to place.)

MRS. B. Is twelve hundred the most you'll offer?

(At R.)

MER. Absolutely. *(At c.)*

MRS. B. And you think I could get along in the city on that? *(Crosses to L.)*

MER. I am sure of it.

MRS. B. *(sits at table at L. looking at deed)*. Maybe I'd better talk it over with Aaron first.

MER. No use for that. He'd advise you to sell. Now, just sign your name right there.

(Hands her fountain pen.)

MRS. B. *(starts to write, changes her mind, looks at him)*. Are you going to run the farm yourself?

MER. Oh, no. I'm just going to hold it for a year or two. *(Takes out wallet.)* See, I have the money here. Spot cash. *(Counts it.)* Twelve hundred dollars.

MRS. B. I think I'll do it. *(Starts to sign.)*

SIS *(heard outside)*. Lemme in, lemme in, lemme in! He's a-chasin' me. Open the door. Hurry, er I'll be killed.

MRS. B. *(rushes to door L.)*. What is it?

(Opens the door.)

(SIS runs in, MRS. B. closes door. SIS runs in so fast that she bumps into MER., nearly upsetting him.)

MER. Here, here, what do you mean, you impudent little beggar? *(Down R.)*

SIS. What's that? Who's a beggar? Who's a impudent beggar? *(Swings her right arm around in big circle, then doubles it up, feeling arm muscle.)* See that? *(Shows left fist.)* That means six weeks' in the horse-pistol. And that! *(Shows right fist.)* That means certain death. *(Goes to him threateningly.)* Now, who's a beggar?

MRS. B. *(comes down c.)*. Why, Sis, I'm surprised at you. *(Takes her arm.)*

SIS. I don't care. He called me a beggar.

(Breaks away from MRS. B. and rushes at MER.)

MRS. B. *(grabbing her around the waist and pulling her to L.)*. Now you jest sit down there and cool yourself off a bit. *(Pushes SIS into a chair at L.)*

SIS. I ain't goin' to let no city dude call me no beggar.

MRS. B. You keep cool, young lady, or I'll put you in the ice box and make you.

SIS. The nerve of him! After all I was doin' for his gal, too.

MER. My girl? What do you mean my girl?

SIS. I mean Miss High and Mighty, that there city gal what's boardin' here.

MER. My niece. Where is she?

SIS. Well, the last I seen of her, she was settin' up in the old apple tree down in the south pasture. Yep, she was up in the tree about twelve foot from the ground.

MER. Gladys May up in a tree? What was she doing up in a tree?

SIS. Oh, she was jest sittin' there. Hangin' on fer dear life. She like to had the daylight's skeered outer her. That's what.

MER. What frightened her?

MRS. B. Yes, yes, Sis, what was it? Go ahead and tell us and don't go all around Robin Hood's barn, neither.

SIS. Well, I went down by the crick tryin' to see ef I could ketch some mud turkles er sich, and I never caught a one. Funny, ain't it, how there ain't no mud turkles out this afternoon? Most always when the sun's a-shinin' I kin find a plenty.

MER. We don't want to hear about mud turtles.

MRS. B. No! Sis Riggs, if you ain't the most exasperatin' child! What about Miss Merridew?

SIS. Well, I'm a-comin' to that. After I seen there wasn't no mud turkles I decided to see if any of them apples in the old south pasture was ripe, so up I went. And when I got there, what you think I saw?

MER. I don't know.

MRS. B. A snake?

SIS. Naw, nothin' like it. I saw Miss City Lady a-climbin' up in the apple tree. I wondered how come she to do that, 'cause them's my apples, them is. But she let out a yell that you could hear clean to Jericho, and then I see what had happened.

MER. Well, what was it?

MRS. B. Yes, yes, go on.

SIS. Gimme time. She was bein' chased by that old brindle cow. You know that mean old boy I call Old Nick. Well, he was rarin' and tearin' and pawin' and growlin' and caperin' around wuss'n a chicken with its head cut off. He'd done chased her clean across the field and up into that tree. (*Laughs.*) I declare I never saw nobody climb a tree quicker'n that city gal. Actually she was worser'n a circus. She lost her parrysol and she lost her hand-bag, and I declare ef she wasn't so skeered that half her hair come out of her head and fell down out'n the tree. (*Laughs.*) I reckon it wasn't fastened on very tight.

MER. But what became of her?

SIS. I didn't have no time to ask. I throwed a couple of big rocks at Old Nick and what you think? He started after me. Whew! I run and he run. It was worser'n a race at the County Fair. I never knowed that old cow had so much *run* in him. Like to wore me to frazzles. He shore did.

MER. And poor Gladys May, I suppose she's almost scared to death.

MER. Yep, I reckon she is. I didn't have no time to waste on pore Gladys May; all I was thinkin' about was pore little Sis Riggs and that there old brindle cow. Whew! I never run so fast in all my borned days. Like to oozed the wind clean out o' me.

MER. I must go and find my niece at once. (*Crosses to door, getting hat and coat.*) And if that cow starts after me, I'll shoot him. [*Exit, L.*]

SIS. You better not shoot our cow. We'll have the law on you. (*Comes down to MRS. B. at c.*) Say, I hope Old Nick does git after him. Cricky, I'd give a bit to see that old city dude runnin' a race with that

brindle. And, believe me, I'd bet my money on the brindle.

MRS. B. My land of love, here I am and I clean forgot all about the bread dough. *[Exit, R.]*

SIS. Say, you'd better hurry up. *(Speaking to MRS. B., who is outside R.)* I seen Mr. Slick over by the road and he was headin' this way.

Enter MRS. B. from R. with pan of bread-dough.

MRS. B. *(at table down R.)*. Well, Sis, I ain't got no time to dress up for Mr. Slick. If he wants to see me, I reckon he can see me just like I am. *(Working dough.)*

SIS. Say, Miz Berry, is Mr. Slick a-courtin' you?

MRS. B. Why, Sis Riggs, how you talk! And you jest a young'un, too. I declare, I'm shocked at you sayin' such things.

SIS. Yes, I know, but is he?

MRS. B. I ain't got no time to be palaverin' about Aaron Slick, and you ain't either. You go out to the pump and wash them hands and then come in here and help me with this dough.

SIS *(crosses to door L.)*. All right, jest as you say. But if he is a-courtin' you, I wish you'd lemme know. I'm jest crazy to hear a man court. *[Exit, L.]*

MRS. B. Well, of all things! What'll that gal git into her head next? *(Kneading dough.)* Jest as if Aaron Slick could ever git up gumption enough to propose to any one. I've been a widder fer over ten years and goodness knows that's long enough. I know he wants to pop the question, but I'll never marry a man who hain't got the gumption enough to propose to me, no siree! not if I have to be a widder the rest of my born days. *(Pause.)* Aaron's a nice man, too. But there ain't a more backward critter in the hull state o' Oklyhomy.

Enter MER., leading GLADYS, from L.

GLADYS *(long groan)*. Oh! Oh! That horrible cow. He chased me and chased me and I had to climb up in an apple tree. Oh! My dress is ruined and I know I must look a sight. And there isn't a nerve left in my body.

MRS. B. (*wiping her hands on apron*). There, you come along with me. Right up to your room. I'll get you some arnica and make you comfortable.

GLAD. Comfortable? Oh, I'll never be comfortable again as long as I live. Uncle Merridew, we simply must leave this place at once.

MER. Yes, yes. We will return to town to-morrow. Mrs. Berry is going to sell me her place to-day and we can go home the first thing in the morning.

GLAD. No. The first thing you must do, Uncle Merridew, when she sells you her place is to kill that cow!

MER. Very well, dear.

MRS. B. Now come along to your room. You're all upset. (*Leading her to R.*)

GLAD. All upset. I should say I was all upset. Oh, that horrible creature. I'll dream about him for the rest of my life. And I thought there were no wild animals left in Oklahoma.

(MRS. B. *leads her out at R., followed by MER. Enter SIS from L.*)

SIS. Well, I got my hands washed clean as a whistle. (*Looks at them.*) They're pretty clean. But what I couldn't get off in the trough I kin git off in the dough. (*Kneads dough.*) There ain't nothin' like good old dough to make your hands white and purty. (*Picks up bunch of dough and looks at it.*) Kinder hard on the dough, though. (*Kneads bread.*)

Enter MER. from R.

MER. My niece is all right now. I think I owe you something. (*Takes out dollar from pocket.*)

SIS. Go on away from here, I don't want none of yer money.

MER. But I'm rewarding you for what you did for my niece.

SIS. I don't want'er be rewarded. You called me a beggar. I ain't got no use fer city folks nohow. Honest, I never see sich gumps in all my life. The idea of that

gal scarin' our old cow with her parrysol. Must think he likes parrysols and things.

MER. I'll admit that was a mistake. Come on, let us be friends. You're a right pretty little girl, and I like pretty little girls.

SIS. Yep, you like to call 'em beggars.

MER. Oh, come now. I'll apologize.

SIS. I don't keer what you do.

MER. Won't you take this dollar?

SIS. No, I won't. Go on now and lemme make this yere bread. I ain't got no time to let you court me.

MER. Court you?

SIS (*with closed lips, meaning yes*). Um-umph! I ain't goin' to have no city fellers makin' up to me.

MER. Oh, if that's the way you feel about it.

(*Starts to L.*)

SIS. Say, mister, are you goin' to buy Miss Rosy's farm?

MER. Yes, I believe I am. She's going to sell it to me to-day.

SIS. What you going to do with it?

MER. Oh, I'm going to make it into a summer vacation home for Miss Gladys and myself.

SIS (*sits on table and swings feet*). Say, if you gimme that dollar I'll tell you sump'm.

MER. I thought you wouldn't take it.

SIS. I wouldn't take it, fer nothin'. I ain't no beggar. But I know sump'm, an' what I know you'd like to know, and it's worth a dollar.

MER. (*gives her dollar*). There's your dollar.

SIS (*bites it*). Are you sure it's good?

MER. (*smiles*). Perfectly.

SIS (*rings it*). Ain't counterfeit er nothin', is it?

MER. No. Now what do you want to tell me?

SIS (*puts dollar in her shoe*). Well, you know that old spring over on the west forty?

MER. (*starts guiltily*). What do you mean?

SIS. Aw, I know you know it. I saw you down there yesterday a-leanin' over and smellin' in it. Well, it ain't no good.

MER. So I judged. That's why I was examining it.

SIS. No, sir, it shore ain't no good fer drinkin'. Got some kind o' black stuff floatin' on the water. Plumb clean pizen that spring is. If you go and drink any of that water they'll have to take your measure fer a long white robe and a little golden harp.

MER. Well, I don't think I'll take the chance. Thank you for your warning. I think I'll go and have another look at that spring. *[Exit, L.]*

SIS (*runs after him, yells out of door*). One o' old man Doolittle's calves taken a drink outer that spring oncet and they had veal fer supper fer six weeks. (*Comes down to L. table.*) I don't like that man, too blamed slick fer me. I wisht he and his gal would go back to the city and leave us alone. I don't see how come Miss Rosy wants to sell this yere farm anyhow. (*Sees fountain pen left on table by MRS. B.*) Oh, lookee there! Someun's done left a pen right out yere where it might git stole. (*Picks it up.*) Looks like a tolerable good pen, too. (*Puts it in dress.*) Might come in handy some time when I wants to write a love letter.

AARON (*heard outside at L., calling as from a long distance*). Hallooo! the house!

SIS (*runs to door*). Oh, it's Mr. Slick.

(MUSIC: *Some bright, fast country air, such as "Hown' Dawg" or "Long Boy."*)

AARON (*outside*). Anybody at home?

SIS (*at door*). Yep, I'm at home. Come on in and rest yer feet.

AARON (*nearer*). Hello, Sis. How you sagashiat-ing?

SIS. Right peert, thank ye, Mr. Slick. How you come on?

AARON (*still outside*). Slicker'n a cornstalk fiddle. How's all your folks?

SIS. Maw's got the plumbago, the baby's got the tizic, paw's in jail and the old hound dawg's done run away. 'Cept fer that we're all right. Come on in.

(AARON *appears in doorway at L. The music, which*

has been very soft before he appears, now swells loud and then stops.)

AARON (*in doorway*). Mis' Rosy at home?

SIS. Yep, she's home.

AARON (*bashfully*). I jest thought I'd drop over and inquire.

SIS. We knowed you was comin'.

AARON. How'd you know?

SIS. 'Cause you allers *do* come on a Thursday. Well, you kin come in. Take off your hat. (*Takes it.*) Now make yourself right at home. (*Pushes a chair to him.*) And set.

AARON (*sits at L.*). Much obliged.

SIS (*hangs up his hat*). Say, Mr. Slick, have you come a-courtin' Miss Rosy?

AARON. Wall, I dunno as I have.

SIS. Well, if you hain't, why hain't you?

AARON. Say, Sis, do you reckon Miss Rosy likes me?

SIS. I dunno.

AARON. Do you reckon as how she could learn to like me?

SIS. I heerd her say she learned to like cod liver oil when she had to take it, so I reckon she could. You orter ask her. (*Kneads bread.*)

AARON. Oh, I couldn't do that. I'm too bashful.

SIS. Ain't you never asked a lady to become your lawful wedded wife? Never, in the hull world?

AARON. Nope, I ain't never asked nobody, but I came plumb near it oncet.

SIS. How near did you come?

AARON. Well, I thought about it a heap, and I felt like it a good deal, and I purt' nigh popped, but somehow I didn't.

SIS. Oh, you was afraid. You're a great, big, no-'count coward. How come you didn't pop?

AARON. Wall, jest as I was about to do it there come a flutter round about the innermost regions of my heart, and I begun to git wobbly around the knees. I declare I thought I was goin' to have the palpitations er colly wobbus er sump'm.

SIS. And you never got no further? Shame on you. And I reckon you're jest as bad now.

AARON. Yes, I reckon I am. And I liked that there gal a heap, too. But she's married now and got six children. (*Long sigh.*) I wisht I wasn't so dumbdashed bashful.

SIS. But there's just as good fish in the sea as ever were cotched.

AARON. There's some whales in the sea, too, ain't there?

SIS. I reckon.

AARON. Say, suppose we go a-fishin' some day. There's lots of worms down by the spring in the west forty.

SIS. Maybe that's what that city man was huntin' fer yesterday.

AARON. You mean Miss Rosy's summer boarder?

SIS. Yep. He's a-goin' to buy her place.

AARON (*surprised*). He is? What's he want it fer?

SIS. Oh, jest fer a vacation, he says. He offered her a hull lot of money.

AARON. And is she goin' to sell?

SIS. I reckon she is. She's jest crazy to move to the city.

AARON. You say the man was huntin' fer fishin' worms yesterday?

SIS. I dunno what he was doin'. I see him down by the old spring all hunched down on the ground a-smellin' the water.

AARON. Smellin' the water? What fur?

SIS. I dunno. I told him it wasn't no good to drink.

AARON. When did he offer to buy the place?

SIS. I dunno.

AARON. After you saw him at the spring?

SIS. Oh, yes. Some time last night.

AARON (*laughs*). I reckon he must 'a' liked the smell of that spring.

SIS. Well, if he did he's plumb crazy, that's all I can say. Phew, it's worsen'n a wildcat.

AARON. Say, Sis, don't you reckon you'd better tell Miss Rosy I'm here?

SIS. Oh, she knows it. She's up-stairs a-fixin' up fer

you. Say, Mr. Slick, why don't you pop the question to Miss Rosy?

AARON. Why, child, how you talk. Ain't you got no modesty at all?

SIS. I dunno what it is. And I don't reckon none of us Riggses has got any nohow. They don't trust us down at the grocery no more. That's how come I'm a-workin' out here at Miss Rosy's. There, I reckon that dough's about all ready fer the oven.

(Puts it in baking-pan.)

AARON. Where is that there city feller now?

SIS. Down at the old spring agin, I reckon. He jest went out and was headin' over that way.

AARON *(crosses to door L.)*. I wonder if he is.

(Looks out.)

SIS. You kin see clean down to the spring from the barn out there.

AARON. Mebbe I'd better see what he's up to. And you better keep a eye on him, too, Sis, er he's liable to cheat Miss Rosy out'n her eye-teeth. *[Exit, L.]*

MRS. B. *(outside at R.)*. Sis! Sis, who you talkin' to?

SIS. Mr. Slick's done come.

MRS. B. Tell him I'll be right there.

SIS *(crawls under the table at L.)*. Now I'm goin' to see how he pops the question.

Enter AARON from L.

AARON. I couldn't see him nowhere. *(Looks around.)* Why, where on earth has she got to?

Enter MRS. B. from R.

MRS. B. Oh, Mr. Slick.

(Shakes hands with him, he acting bashful.)

AARON. Howdy, Miss Rosy, howdy.

MRS. B. Was Sis entertaining you?

AARON. I reckon that's what you might call it.

MRS. B. Look at that dough. It ain't half ready.
(*Kneads it.*) Sit down.

AARON. Say, Miss Rosy, I've been a-intendin' to come over to see you ever since last Thursday. I got sump'm partickler I want'er ask you.

MRS. B. (*comes to him*). You have? What is it?

AARON. Well, it's (*hesitates, looks at her, clears throat, pauses*)—it is —

MRS. B. (*after a pause*). Yes, Aaron, what is it?

AARON. Well, you've knowed me fer a long time, ain't you?

MRS. B. Right tolerable.

AARON. Like me pretty well, don't ye?

MRS. B. Well, I ain't got nothin' agin you.

AARON (*hesitates and stammers*). I—I—that is —
(*Pauses.*) I was jest saying —

(*She looks at him as he pauses; he catches her eye and smiles.*)

MRS. B. Yes, Aaron? What was you going to say?

AARON. Well, I was going to say — (*Pauses.*)

MRS. B. Yes, you said that before.

AARON (*very bashful, twisting foot around and looking at it*). I been a-thinkin'.

MRS. B. You'd better set down, Aaron, maybe you can collect your thoughts better.

AARON. I dunno but I had:

(*Sits at L. of L. table, facing audience.*)

MRS. B. (*sits R. of the L. table, facing audience*).
Now, go ahead and say what you wanted to.

(*SIS peeks out from under table; she is visible to audience but not seen by the actors.*)

AARON. Wall, you know, Rosy, I'm a powerful lonesome man, I am. Powerful lonesome livin' all alone down there by Punkin Crick. And you're powerful lonesome too, livin' up yere on this farm. Ain't you?

MRS. B. Sometimes.

AARON. And I've been a-wonderin' (*SIS nudges his*

*leg with her elbow. He looks surprised at Mrs. B.)—*er, that is, I been a-wonderin' ——— (*Sis nudges harder, Aaron pauses, smiles at Mrs. B.*) Aw, now, you go on!

MRS. B. (*puts her arm on table*). What have you been wondering, Aaron?

AARON (*takes her hand*). If you and me—that is, if me and you—that is, if we, both of us ———

(*Pauses, looks at her and grins.*)

MRS. B. Why, Aaron Slick, you got a hold of my hand.

AARON (*drops it and says hastily*). Oh, excuse me, excuse me, I thought it was the pickle bottle.

MRS. B. (*indignantly*). Pickle bottle?

AARON. No, no, I don't mean that. (*Takes her hand again.*) I was jest a-thinking that maybe you and me, both of us being lonesome ———

(*Their two hands slide from table down onto Sis's head; both feel her head; surprised, pause, then both look under the table.*)

MRS. B. Oh, I thought it was a rat.

AARON. Sis Riggs!

MRS. B. Why, Sis Riggs, ain't you shamed? (*Pulls her out.*) I never see sich a gal in all my born days. Hidin' under there like a burglar er sump'm. (*Takes her by the ear.*) Now you jest march out in the kitchen, young lady—and lock the door. I ain't a-goin' to have you pryin' into my family affairs.

SIS. Ouch! Leggo my ear. I ain't done nothin'. Honest, I ain't. I jest wanted to hear him pop, that's all.

MRS. B. (*pushes her off at R.*). You orter have a good lickin', that's what!

AARON (*rises*). Now don't be hard on her, Rosy. She means all right, but she's jest full of the old nick.

(*Mrs. B. kneads the bread at table R.*)

MRS. B. The idea of her under that table. I'll never git over it, never!

AARON (*goes to her*). Oh, yes you will, Rosy. Now,

as I was a-sayin' — (*Pauses, looks at her.*) My, but you're lookin' pretty to-day.

MRS. B. (*kneads bread rapidly*). Oh, now you Aaron!

AARON (*takes her left hand, she kneads with her right*). Suppose I was to ask you if you'd care to (*clears throat*), if you'd care to —

MRS. B. Oh, I'm so nervous.

(*Grabs her other hand and gets his hand all over dough.*)

AARON. Now see what I did.

MRS. B. Why, Aaron Slick, I didn't know you was a bread mixer.

AARON. I ain't. I can't even make the dough.

MRS. B. Now you go and sit down. Can't you see I'm busy? (*Puts bread dough in pan.*)

AARON (*takes pan of dough from her and puts it on table at L.*). Now, see here, Rosy, I want to talk to you—and we can't make bread and talk at the same time.

MRS. B. For the land sakes, Aaron, it must be right pertickler what you're goin' to say.

AARON. It is. I was jest going to ask you. (*She comes to him.*) That is, I was — (*Pauses, looks at her; she smiles.*) Gosh!

MRS. B. Aaron Slick, I believe you've had a drop too much.

AARON. No, I ain't. It ain't liquor that's got me tongue-tied, it's love.

MRS. B. Love? (*Bashfully.*) Why, Aaron.

AARON. And I was jest goin' to ask you —

MRS. B. Go on, have a little sand, Aaron, go on and get busy. It'll be Christmas before I know what you're talking about.

AARON. Then will you—Rosy, will you —

Enter GLAD. from R.

GLAD. Oh, Mrs. Berry, the cat jumped up on my bed!

AARON. Consarn the cat. (*Stamps to table.*) I say, consarn the cat. (*Brings his hand down with heavy gesture into the pan of dough.*) Gee whillikins!

MRS. B. (at c.). Why, Aaron Slick, such language!

AARON (*puts pan of dough on chair*). Say, I wish that dough was in Jericho.

GLAD. I threw some water on her and I think she had a fit.

(*Sis runs in from R., carrying broom.*)

SIS. Oh, Miss Rosy, you orter see the cat. She's tearin' around like all possessed.

(*Lively music; all speak lines rapidly until end of act.*)

MRS. B. Has she got a fit?

SIS (at R.). She's worse'n that. She knocked over the churn and spilled all the cream.

MRS. B. My land of love!

SIS (*loud and fast*). She ran right under my feet and knocked me down. I fell into the big pan of apple-butter and spiled my dress.

GLAD. Oh, isn't that awful!

AARON (*down L.*). Let me shoot her.

(*Loud noise outside R. of tin pans falling with great clatter.*)

MRS. B. (*screams*). What's that?

SIS (*looks out door R.*). She's after a mouse. (*Screams.*) Oh, there it comes.

(*Points to floor; ladies scream. GLAD. jumps on rocking-chair. Cat runs in after mouse. Note: this effect is easily worked. Make the cat mad and rush her on the stage; what she does then is of little importance.*)

AARON. There she is.

MRS. B. Gimme that broom.

(*Grabs broom, strikes at cat and misses it.*)

SIS (*jumps on chair*). Look out, Miss City Gal, that mouse'll eat you alive.

(*GLAD. screams.*)

MRS. B. Where is she? I'll kill that cat.

(Twirls around, waving broom; strikes AARON across chest with flat end of broom.)

AARON. Help, help! *(Falls on the pan of dough.)*

MRS. B. Heavens and earth, he's ruined my dough.

AARON *(rises)*. There, take your dough.

(Grabs dough and gives it to MRS. B.)

MRS. B. *(hits him on head with dough)*. There!

(Positions: AARON at C., MRS. B., L. C., GLAD. standing on rocking-chair, R. C., SIS standing on table at R., laughing.)

QUICK CURTAIN

(SECOND PICTURE: AARON seated L., feebly moaning.

MRS. B. standing by him picking the dough from his head.)

MRS. B. I didn't mean to do it. Oh, Aaron, speak to me, don't faint. Speak to me and say that you forgive me. *(Keep on talking till curtain falls.)*

CURTAIN

ACT II

SCENE.—*Same as before, but the room is straightened up. At the rise of curtain MRS. B. is ironing on table at R. AARON is seated by table at L.*

AARON. So you've decided to sell your place, have you?

MRS. B. Yes, I have. I'm going to move to the city.

AARON. And leave all your friends here at Punkin Crick?

MRS. B. They won't care much.

AARON. Yes, they will, too. I know some of 'em will anyhow.

MRS. B. Who, fer instance?

AARON (*thinking*). Well, there's old man DeNoon. He thinks a lot of you, don't he?

MRS. B. I reckon he thinks more of my property than he does of me. I ain't a-hankerin' fer no widerer with seven children nohow.

AARON. Then there's the preacher.

MRS. B. I ain't good enough for a preacher. And besides he's bow-legged, and deliver me from a bow-legged man.

AARON. How about Isaac Quackenbush? He's allers a-makin' goo-goo eyes at you at prayer-meetin'.

MRS. B. He ain't neither.

AARON. Yes he is, too. Isaac's got a nice business, too.

MRS. B. Yes, and he's the stingiest man in Oklyhomy, he is. That man is so mean that he'd put green spectacles on his hosses and then feed 'em sawdust to make 'em think they was eatin' grass.

AARON. But he's got money.

MRS. B. Yes, I reckon he has, but he sure does know how to keep it. He took me to the county fair last

year and he actually made me pay my own way in to see the fat lady. And I bought a bag of peanuts and he et more'n half of 'em. Don't say Isaac Quackenbush to me. I ain't hankerin' after a man nowadays.

AARON. There's plenty of 'em hankerin' after you.

(Crosses to her.)

MRS. B. *(bashfully)*. Oh, now you go on. There ain't either. *(Irons rapidly.)*

AARON. I can't see why you're so set on selling your place and moving to the city.

MRS. B. An Oklyhomy farm ain't no place fer a poor lone woman all by herself in the world. And I jest love the city. *(Places iron near his hand.)*

AARON. Now, Rosy, I ain't much of a feller, I know—and I ain't got much money, but I got a heart that burns—that burns. *(Puts hand on iron.)* Jumpin' caterpillars, I should say it did burn.

MRS. B. Oh, Aaron, did you burn your hand?

AARON. Oh, it don't 'mount to nothin'. I was jest sayin', Rosy, that I got a little bottom land down on Punkin Crick and it bumps right into your farm. Now, ain't that jest providential that the two farms bump right smack into each other?

MRS. B. What's providential about it?

AARON. Looks like it was jest intended that you and me —

Enter GLAD. from R.

GLAD. Oh, Mrs. Berry, I'm going to take a little stroll out into the verdant fields. I want to pick some wild-flowers. Are you sure that cow has been locked up?

MRS. B. I reckon he has. I told Sis Riggs to put him in the barn.

GLAD. *(comes down L. and sits L.)*. I didn't know you were entertaining a visitor.

MRS. B. Oh, I ain't doin' much entertainin'. Mr. Aaron Slick and Miss Gladys May Merridew, let me make you all acquainted.

AARON. Howdy! *(Offers his hand.)*

GLAD. Delighted, I'm sure.

(Holds her hand up high for high hand-shake.)

AARON. Oh, don't mention it. *(Looks for her hand, finally sees it, reaches up, grasps it, pulls it down and gives it a hearty shake.)* How's the crops up in the city?

GLAD. *(puzzled)*. Crops?

AARON. Yep. I hear you all have a right big harvest of wild oats.

GLAD. Oh, I don't know, I'm sure. But I simply adore the country. It's just too sweet for anything. *(Goes to door or window.)* And so poetical. Just look! there comes a harvester, tall and handsome and stalwart, as graceful as a young Hercules.

AARON *(looks out)*. Who, him? That's one of my farm hands. Cross-eyed and forty year old if he's a day. Good farmer, though, when he ain't full o' liquor.

GLAD. And see, he is driving the gentle cows to pasture, isn't he?

AARON *(looks)*. Cows? *(Laughs loudly.)* Rosy, come yere and see what she's a-callin' cows.

MRS. B. *(looks)*. Why, them's a yoke of oxen, Miss Merridew.

GLAD. Why, I'm sure they look just like all the pictures of cows I've seen.

MRS. B. That was a cow that chased you this afternoon. At least it was a gentleman cow.

GLAD. Yes, the horrid thing. I can't see why he started after me.

MRS. B. It was the parasol and red hat you was wearin'.

GLAD. My, my! I knew that hat was last season's style, but I don't see how the cow knew that.

AARON *(dryly)*. Cows has got jest as much sense as humans, sometimes. *(Pause.)* And a heap more than some.

Enter SIS from L.

SIS. I got the old cow tied up in the barn. I don't reckon he'll git after you no more.

MRS. B. Sis, you go and get the churn and get to

work. Seems like we're awful behindhand with the work this week.

SIS (*churns at rear L.*). Well, it ain't my fault. I ain't aimin' to work in no boardin' house nohow.

MRS. B. (*sniffs*). I think I smell that gingerbread. (*Hurries to R. door.*) Seems like it's jest about done.

[*Exit, R.*]

SIS (*churning*). My, I wisht I lived in the city.

GLAD. (*seated down L.*). The idea! Why, country life is just wonderful. I just adore Oklahoma.

AARON (*seated c.*). Well, you can travel a long ways and find a lot worse.

GLAD. Was that man going to mow the hay, Mr. Slick?

AARON. Not jest yet. You see the hay is all grass jest at present.

GLAD. Grass? Why, hay isn't grass, is it? (*Laughs.*) Of course not. You're trying to fool me. Grass is green and hay is brown. (*Sis laughs.*)

SIS. You got a good eye fer color anyhow.

AARON. There ain't no hay till it's cut and dried. That takes all the green out of it. You know it ain't like people, it ain't as green as it looks.

GLAD. I have a lovely bunch of grass at home in a vase in the library. I got it at the florist's. Do you suppose the mowers would mow me another bunch?

AARON. I reckon. You can have all you kin tote away.

GLAD. Oh, thank you. (*Goes to Sis.*) It makes such a lovely decoration. (*Looks at churn.*) And what is that strange implement, little girl?

SIS (*points to churn*). This yere thing?

GLAD. Yes, what is it? (*Takes hold of dasher.*)

SIS. Don't you know? Why, it's a churn. That's where the butter comes from.

GLAD. Butter? Why, I always fancied the butter came from the cow.

SIS (*laughs*). Well, I'll be blessed.

AARON (*laughs*). So'll I!

SIS. It does come from the cow but, you see, we've got to shake it up in here.

GLAD. Oh, I understand. Just like a milk shake at the soda fountain. Isn't that interesting!

AARON. Maybe if you chased the cow around enough it 'ud churn the butter and then we wouldn't have to use the churn at all. That 'ud save a heap of trouble. It 'ud make milk shakes, too.

SIS. You see, you got to jiggle the dasher, so! Wanter try it?

GLAD. Oh, I'd just love to. It would be charming. I always thought it would be the acme of bliss to be a little dainty dairy-maid, and make those delicious pots of butter. Gilt-edged, I think they call it. How do you manipulate the handle? (*Takes dasher.*) Is this the way? (*Gives a big jerk that sends the milk splashing all over her.*) Oh! (*Screams.*) How horrible! Now my dress is ruined.

AARON. You never should have tried it, rigged out in all that toggery.

GLAD. (*crying*). Oh, I never was cut out for a country girl. And look at my nice new dress.

SIS. Miss Rosy's out in the smoke-house. You go out there and she'll rense it out fer you.

(*Leads her to door L. GLAD. exits, L.*)

AARON. Of all the born dumb fools these yere city folks take the cake every time.

SIS. And now look at all this mess.

(*Cleans up milk, then churns. GLAD., outside L., gives a wild shriek. The sound of a turkey gobbling heard outside L.*)

AARON (*runs to door L.*). Heavens to Betsy, what's the matter now?

(*GLAD. rushes in L., screaming and tottering. She sinks in chair at C.*)

GLAD. Oh, that frightful monster. What could it have been? It came right at me.

SIS. That's our old Salamanca. He wouldn't hurt you.

AARON. Ain't you never seen a turkey gobbler afore?

GLAD. No, no, and I never want to see one again. He made a noise and rushed right at me.

SIS. He's the old gobbler that we're fattening fer Thanksgiving.

GLAD. I don't care what he is. In another second I would have been stung to death. He rushed at me and stuck out his red fangs. Oh, I think I'm going to faint.

(Sinks back in chair.)

SIS. Here, lemme take you to your room.

(Assists her.)

GLAD. Oh, I think the country is the most horrible place in the world. I wouldn't live here for a king's ransom. *(Crosses to R.)* Uncle Merridew must take me home to-night. Cows and turkey gobblers! Oh, I'm completely upset; my nerves are a total wreck. *[Exit, R.]*

AARON. Well, what you think of that?

SIS. Plumb crazy in the head. Say, Mr. Slick, are all city folks like that?

AARON. Most of 'em, I reckon.

SIS. It's a wonder the good Lord lets 'em live.

(Works churn.)

AARON. Say, Sis, I've been a-wonderin' how come Mr. Merridew wants to buy Miss Rosy's farm. He seems awful anxious to get it.

SIS. Said he wanted it fer a summer vacation home, er sump'm.

AARON. He's a city slicker, he is, and I shouldn't be surprised if there was sump'm crooked about the dicker.

SIS. He seems to hang round that there spring most of the time. Maybe it's runnin' medicine, er sump'm. It shore smells like it.

AARON. It might be a mineral spring. I've heard of them things. Er it might be oil.

SIS. Oil? There ain't no oil in this part of Okly-homy. It's all in the north er west. Say, wouldn't it be

grand if it *was* oil? I yeerd of a man who made a hundred million dollars a day jest 'cause there was oil on his place.

AARON. There's a screw loose somewheres. Say, Sis, you kinder take a hike over there by the spring and see what that feller's a-doin'.

SIS. I got all this yere churnin' to do.

AARON. Maybe I'd better take a squint at it myself. But you wanter keep yer eyes open, Sis. You don't want 'em to slick Miss Rosy out'n her farm, do you?

SIS. Nope, and I don't like that there feller nohow. Called me a beggar, the great big gump!

AARON. I'm goin' down and see what he's up to. You tell Miss Rosy I'll be back purt' soon and not to worry.

SIS. I'll tell her. And say, Mr. Slick, if that there city feller tries to hoodwink Miss Rosy outa her farm, you jest put a head on him (*swings right arm and feels muscle*), er jest leave him to me, that's all, jest leave him to me.

AARON. All right, Sis. [Exit, L.]

SIS. He better not fool with me, 'cause I'm a bad child, born in a bad State, in a bad county and in a bad deestruck, and I'm jest bad clean through. (*Churns.*) Gee, I had to laugh at that city gal running away from that old gobbler. He wouldn't hurt a flea. She ain't got a brain in her haid. I might be one of them no-'count Riggses, jest like folks say, but, thank goodness, I ain't a-skeered of a turkey gobbler. (*Song may be introduced, if desired.*) Well, the butter's done come and now I got all these taters to peel. (*Takes dish of potatoes from table at R.*) Gotta run out and wash my hands agin.

(*Starts to door L. as she talks, opens door, bumps into CLARENCE, who enters L. CLARENCE falls to floor at L.*)

CLARENCE. Help!

SIS. Great day in the morning, it's a man!

CLAR. Beg pardon, you dropped something.

SIS (*bashfully*). Oh, excuse me, excuse me. I didn't see you. (*Comes to him.*)

CLAR. No. I'm so small I'm invisible.

SIS. You ain't either. I see you now. Say, who air you?

CLAR. (*rising*). I'm a rising young man.

SIS. Yep, I see you are. You're getting up in the world, ain't you?

CLAR. I'll say I am. (*Sing-song tone.*) First I was down and now I'm up. If you sit down I'll stand up. If you are mad I'll cheer you up, and if you talk I'll shut you up.

SIS. And if you do, I'll blow you up. Say, what's your name?

CLAR. (*sing-song tone*). My name is one that's often seen, in fact my name is Clarence Green.

SIS. I might 'a' guessed it.

CLAR. Indeed? Why?

SIS. 'Cause you look it. Say, what you want here anyhow?

CLAR. Are you the lady of the house?

SIS. Now, looka here, mister, we don't want no sewing machines and we don't want no lightning rods, ner pain killer, ner chiny dinner sets, ner encyclopeedies. And if it's books, we don't want none, we never did want none and we never will want none. So if you're a peddler, you git.

CLAR. Oh, I'm not a peddler.

SIS. Well, what are you?

CLAR. I? I am a gentleman of leisure. I'm too rich to work.

SIS. A tramp! Say, if you don't git outa here I'll sick the dog on you.

CLAR. Be not so cruel, fair maiden, but cease thy chatter and harken to me sorry tale.

SIS. I'm going to call the dog.

CLAR. Pause, gentle maiden, pause. Is that your dog chained outside?

SIS. Yes, that's our dog. His name's Bunker.

CLAR. And you keep him chained. He doesn't get much exercise, does he?

SIS. I should say he does. He goes for a tramp every day.

CLAR. Fair maiden, I am not a tramp. I am a poet and by my looks I show it.

SIS. You'd better git out of here and go it. (*Picks up flat-iron.*) 'Cause if you don't I'll throw it. (*Laughs.*) I reckon I'm something of a poet myself.

CLAR. I understand you take in summer boarders.

SIS. Oh, yes, we take 'em in all right.

CLAR. And I hear you now have several.

SIS. Your hearing's good. We got two.

CLAR. From the city?

SIS. I reckon so; they act like it.

CLAR. Man named Merridew? And who is with him?

SIS. How'd you know his name was Merridew?

CLAR. I guess it.

SIS. Then go ahead and guess who's with him?

CLAR. Pretty cute, ain't you?

SIS. Folks say I'm pretty and I know I'm cute. That makes me pretty cute.

CLAR. Mr. Merridew here now?

SIS. Nope, he's down by the old spring. Wanter see him?

CLAR. Not just at present.

SIS. He's going to buy our farm.

CLAR. He is? Well, take a little tip from Clarence, and make him pay you real money for it.

SIS. Real money? You don't think he'd try to slick us with counterfeit, do you?

CLAR. I don't know. All I can tell you is not to take any checks.

SIS. You bet we won't.

CLAR. Now I think I'll just take a look at this Mr. Merridew. Where did you say I could find him?

SIS. Down by the old spring. Go down the medder path thataway. (*Points.*)

CLAR. Very well, fair maiden, soon will I return and then we will burn the old castle at midnight.

SIS (*giggles*). Oh, now you go on.

CLAR. Remember what I said and keep your eyes open. (*Goes to door L.*) Again, farewell, this parting is such sweet sorrow that I would say good-night till it were morrow.

SIS. Say, mister, when you go down the medder path you wanten look out.

CLAR. Look out? What for?

SIS. One of them old cows is liable to eat you. They're powerful fond of greens.

CLAR. Stung! Right on the forehead. (*Dramatically.*) Farewell, farewell, sweet maid, farewell.

[*Exit, L.*

SIS (*giggles*). Ain't he jest awful? (*Pause.*) But he's kind o' cute, too. I wonder if he's got a girl. I allers did like city fellers, when they ain't too fresh. And he might be green, but he ain't so fresh.

Enter GLAD. from R.

GLAD. Have you seen anything of my uncle?

SIS. Seems like the whole darn town is a-huntin' your uncle. He's down by the old spring. Take the medder road —

GLAD. Never! Do you think I'd trust myself out in this barbarous place all alone, after all I've gone through?

SIS. Oh, you needn't be skeered, I got the old cow Nicodemus tied up and the turkey gobbler's 'bout a mile away, I reckon.

GLAD. (*at door L.*). My nerves are all shattered and my dress was completely ruined. (*Looks out L.*) Oh, here comes my uncle now. (*Calls.*) Uncle Wilbur, Uncle Wilbur.

[*Exit at L.*

SIS (*mimics her*). Uncle Wilbur! Uncle Wilbur! My nerves is all shattered and my dress is completely ruined. Wouldn't that make you jump sideways? (*Looks out at L.*) Here they come. I wonder if he is going to cheat Miss Rosy outer the farm. If I could hide and hear what they say maybe I'd know. Where'll I hide? (*Climbs in clothes basket and puts clothes over head.*) I reckon I'm safe here. I allers *did* think I looked like a rag-bag but I never thought I'd be taken fer a bunch of dirty clothes. (*Hides.*)

Enter MER. and GLAD. from L.

MER. There, there, Gladys May, calm yourself.

GLAD. Calm? I'll never be calm again until I'm back home in Chicago.

MER. We'll leave the first thing in the morning.

GLAD. I'd rather leave to-night. Can't we go at once?

MER. We can't go until Mrs. Berry signs those papers.

GLAD. Then you've decided to buy the farm?

MER. Of course. If she don't sell, I'll make her.

GLAD. But what on earth do you want with this rocky old poverty-stricken farm?

MER. Poverty-stricken? (*Laughs.*) Oh, ho, maybe you're not as wise as your old uncle, Gladys May. I rather think I know a bargain when I see it. This farm is worth half a million dollars.

(*Sis pops her head up listening.*)

GLAD. Half a million dollars? Uncle Wilbur, surely you are jesting.

MER. I never jest in business matters, my dear.

GLAD. Is there a gold mine on the place?

MER. Something just as good. (*Looks around; Sis hides.*) There's oil on this farm.

GLAD. Oil?

MER. Yes, and no one suspects it. They're a big bunch of yaps. They don't know that a fortune is beneath their very feet.

GLAD. Oh, I'm so glad. That will make us rich, won't it?

MER. I should say it will. When we get it, and, believe me, your uncle Wilbur is just the man to get it.

GLAD. But that old farmer who was here, Mr. Slick is his name, doesn't he suspect something?

MER. (*laughs*). I should say not. He's just as green as they make 'em. It's like taking candy from a baby. He hasn't got sense enough to see the beans when the bag's open.

GLAD. How do you know there is any oil here?

MER. I've seen it, my dear. Seen it and smelled it. I tell you the place is worth half a million.

GLAD. But you are getting the place from Mrs. Berry for almost nothing.

MER. Business, my dear, a simple, little matter of business. I always buy as cheap as I can and sell as high as I'm able.

GLAD. I hope you can settle the matter up right away. I simply abominate the country.

MER. Oh, I can do that all right. The old lady is just as anxious to get away as you are.

GLAD. Absolutely nothing to do but to look at the scenery. No cafés, no dinners, no balls, no cabarets, nothing!

MER. Only half a million dollars' worth of oil land.

GLAD. And that soon will be ours.

MER. Just as soon as she signs the papers. But you must keep a close tongue, Gladys May; I wouldn't have Mrs. Berry suspect anything for the world.

(Sis looks up listening.)

GLAD. Oh, you can trust me.

MER. I know I can. You see, I found evidences of oil down in that old deserted spring, plenty of it. Why, the water was black and gummy with oil. I suspected all along that there might be some in the neighborhood.

GLAD. At last we have struck it rich. We can move into one of the big Lake front apartment houses in Chicago and enjoy life.

MRS. B. *(outside at R.)*. Sis! You, Sis! *(Pause, followed by long wail.)* Sis Riggs!

(Sis hides in the basket again.)

MER. Remember, not a word of this before Mrs. Berry.

GLAD. I'll go up-stairs and pack. Mrs. Berry is in there. *(Points to R.)* You'd better see her at once and get her to sign the papers. I think that old hayseed Slick wants to propose to her and if he does maybe he won't allow her to sell the farm.

MER. Oh, yes he will, if I offer her a fair price. All he wants is her money. He hasn't any brains. Down at the cross-roads store they make fun of him and the kids yell after him, "Aaron Slick from Punkin Crick, caught a cold and made him sick."

GLAD. Sometimes I think he isn't as ignorant as you say. Maybe he has more sense than we give him credit for.

MER. His name might be Slick, but he isn't. No, Gladys May, he doesn't know enough to come in out of the rain. But I'd better see Mrs. Berry at once.

(Crosses to R.)

GLAD. Yes, for if they decide to marry, I think he might prove an obstacle in our way. *(At R. with MER.)*

MER. I don't want to take any risks.

(They go out at R.)

SIS *(jumps out of the basket)*. Well, I'll be dog-goned! *(Pause.)* What you know about that? *(Shakes fist after MER.)* That mean, old city slicker. I'm going right in there and tell Miss Rosy that her place is worth a billion dollars. *(Pauses.)* No, I'd better see Mr. Slick first. She can't sign the paper nohow, 'cause I swiped the fountain pen. *(Produces it.)* Ho, ho, Mr. City Man, I guess you ain't got all the brains in the world. I'll go down there to the spring and scoop up some of that there oil and show it to Mr. Slick. I reckon I'll show old Merridew that he ain't as cute as he thinks he is. Dog-gone him anyhow! *(Crosses to L. door.)* I'll show him! I'll git ahead of him if I have to turn a summerset in the spring to do it. I'll show him!

[Exit, L.]

Enter MRS. B. from R., followed by MER. She carries the deed of sale.

MRS. B. I left that fountain pen right in here on the table. *(Looks for it.)* Where on earth is it? A body never *kin* lay hands on anything in this house after Sis Riggs has been foolin' around.

MER. Do you see it? You should sign the paper at once and the twelve hundred dollars is yours.

MRS. B. It ain't here. I'll bet a great big doughnut that Sis Riggs has swiped that pen. It 'ud be jest like her.

MER. (*looking around the table*). I'll have the law on her if she has.

MRS. B. I got another one up-stairs. Maybe I'd better get that. (*Goes to R.*)

MER. Very well. And tell Gladys May to come down to witness your signature.

MRS. B. What's the matter, don't you trust me?

MER. Why, of course I do, but we've got to do things according to law.

MRS. B. All right. I've made up my mind to sell and move to the city and the sooner it's over with the better.

[*Exit, R.*]

MER. (*rubbing his hands together*). Yes, indeed, the sooner it's over with the better. Half a million, half a million and all mine! I know how to develop oil land. At last I've made a ten strike.

Enter AARON from L.

AARON. Oh, excuse me, I thought Miss Rosy was here.

MER. (*pleasantly*). Oh, no, but she'll be here presently. Come in.

AARON. All right; jest what I was aimin' to do anyhow. You're her city boarder, I reckon.

MER. (*goes to him and offers to shake hands*). Yes. And you're the slick Mr. Slick, I reckon?

AARON (*paying no attention to his hand, sits at L.*). Yep, I'm him.

MER. I've heard my niece speak of you.

AARON. Yep, I reckon you have. I'm a kind of a dabster hand with the women folks. Miss Rosy tells me you're figgerin' on buyin' her place.

MER. Yes, I am. In fact it's just as good as mine now.

AARON. That so?

MER. Yes, it isn't worth much, but I thought it would do for a vacation place.

AARON. Ain't worth much, hay?

MER. Well, not very much. I'm giving Mrs. Berry twelve hundred for it. A good bargain, too.

AARON. That seems a heap of money fer you to be payin' jest fer a place to spend your vacation in.

MER. Oh, twelve hundred dollars doesn't mean much to me.

AARON. Then how come you don't offer her fifteen hundred?

MER. That's *my* business.

AARON. Got any other?

MER. Any other what?

AARON. Business.

MER. Certainly, I'm a speculator.

AARON. A speckled tater?

MER. Not a speckled tater; a speculator.

AARON. Reckon it's jest about the same thing. Both of 'em's kind o' rotten.

MER. What do you mean, sir?

AARON. Now, set down, and keep cool. Ain't no use o' gettin' all het up down yere in Oklyhomy. It always pays a man to keep cool.

MER. I'm not here to be insulted.

AARON. Kinder touchy, ain't you?

MER. I'm not used to cowboy manners.

AARON. Well, I reckon it 'ud kinder pay you to git a leetle used to 'em, anyway. Especially if you're goin' to come down yere on your vacations. You see us men yere in Oklyhomy's apt to git touchy too, once in a while. Not very often, you understand, but mebbe, once in a while.

MER. Oh, I think I can take care of myself.

AARON. That's jest what the little bantam rooster thought when it saw the chicken hawk a-soarin' round up in the sky, but he changed his mind.

MER. I don't know what you mean. Are you trying to pick a quarrel with me?

AARON. Lawsy, no. I'm the most peaceable individual in Southeastern Oklyhomy. Never killed more'n eight er ten men in my life. And most of them wasn't my fault.

MER. Bah! (*Turns away from him.*)

AARON. Bah? Say, mister, if you go round bahing too much they're liable to lock you up down in the south pasture with the rest of the rams.

MER. I've had enough of this.

AARON. So have I. And, besides, I'm here to see Miss Rosy.

MER. I suppose now that she has sold her place you intend to marry her.

AARON. See here, stranger, I wouldn't monkey with a buzz saw if I was you, 'cause you might git bit. Understand?

MER. Mrs. Berry is a fine lady; she'd make you a good wife.

AARON. Yes, I reckon she would. Still, even if she was willin' I dunno where we'd git married.

MER. Why not at the preacher's?

AARON. Oh, he don't marry folks!

MER. Why, certainly he does. All preachers marry people.

AARON. Our preacher don't. I know he don't.

MER. How do you know?

AARON. 'Cause he's got a big sign out in front of the parsonage that says "Don't hitch here"—I reckon that's plain enough, ain't it?

MER. (*laughs*). That's a good one.

AARON. Yep. I read it in a almanac.

MER. You're a pretty bright man, Mr. Slick.

AARON (*drawls*). Waal, I dunno. I wasn't born yesterday, you know.

MER. Don't you think I am offering Mrs. Berry a pretty good sum for this farm?

AARON. I ain't sure. You say you're a speckled tater, and a speckled tater ain't in the habit of offering any more'n a farm's worth. There's a screw loose somewhere, Mr. Speckled Tater, and I reckon you're too wise to let us find out jest where it is.

MER. You mean that I'm a crook?

AARON. Oh, no, I don't think you're quite slick enough to be a crook, you're jest a slicker, that's all.

MER. Enough of this. This place belongs to me, and I won't allow you to insult me on my own property. Now, you get.

AARON (*seated L., coolly*). Not yet.

MER. If you don't go, I'll throw you off.

AARON. You got a pretty big contract there, Mr. Speckled Tater.

Enter GLAD. from R.

GLAD. Oh, Uncle Merridew, Mrs. Berry can't find a pen anywhere.

MER. Oh, that's all right. Give her this pencil. Tell her to sign the document at once. And then you sign underneath, witnessing her signature.

GLAD. But is a pencil signature within the law?

MER. Certainly. Hurry, Gladys May. Tell her to sign at once.

(GLAD. takes pencil and hurries out at R.)

AARON. Seems you're in a awful hurry to make this dicker.

MER. Please oblige me by attending to your own affairs.

AARON. Oh, all right.

SIS *(heard outside at L., calling)*. Mr. Slick, Mr. Slick! *(Calls as if a long way off.)*

MER. *(starts nervously)*. What's that?

AARON. It's that pesky young 'un hollerin' fer me. *(Goes to door or window and bawls.)* Whatcher want?

SIS *(outside at L.)*. Say, don't let her sell that farm till I git there.

AARON *(bawls)*. What say?

SIS *(nearer)*. Don't let her sell the farm.

AARON. Don't let her sell it? Why not?

MER. It's too late, the farm is already sold.

Enter SIS, running in from L. She carries a battered old bucket.

SIS *(out of breath)*. Oh, Mr. Slick, Mr. Slick, don't let her sell the farm. It's a put up scheme to rob Miss Rosy. *(Pants.)* Gosh, I'm all out of breath.

AARON. What do you mean?

SIS. I don't mean nothin' but this—there's oil on this farm.

MER. It's a lie!

SIS (*jumps at him, knocks him to R.*). It ain't a lie, it's the truth, you old hottentot.

AARON (*pulls SIS to L.*). What does this mean?

SIS. I seen him a-snoopin' down by the old spring and then I heard him tell that city gal that there was oil on the place. I run down to the spring and scooped up this bucket full off'n the top of the water. Look at it. Is it oil?

AARON (*takes bucket; smells it*). Smells like oil.

MER. It isn't oil. That ragamuffin doesn't know what she's talking about.

AARON. By doggies, I believe it is oil!

MER. It isn't. You don't know anything about oil.

AARON. Mebbe not, mebbe not, but right yere's where I'm goin' to find out sump'm about it. Sis, you run down to the store and tell Lawyer Brown to hurry up yere jest as fast as he kin run. I got a case fer him. Better tell the constabule to come too. And tell him to clean the hay outer the county jail; he's li'ble to have a customer before night.

SIS. You bet I will. (*Goes to MER., makes a "face" at him.*) Yah, yah, yah! You will call me a beggar, will you? I reckon they're goin' to put you in the callaboose fer life. Yah, yah, yah! (*Runs out at L.*)

AARON (*facing MER. at C.*). So that was your little game, was it? There's oil on the farm?

MER. If there is, I didn't know it.

AARON. And you were willing to cheat that poor widow woman out of her little fortune, were you? No wonder you call yourself a speckled tater.

MER. Now, see here, this farm may be worth a little more than I gave her.

AARON. A little more! It's worth a darned sight more, and you know it.

MER. Well, why should you say anything about it? See here, I'll give you five hundred dollars —

AARON (*sneers*). Five hundred? You think I'm pretty cheap, don't you?

MER. Eight hundred? (*Pause.*) A thousand?

AARON. No, sir!

MER. Twelve hundred just for you to keep still for five minutes. Twelve hundred dollars.

AARON. Twelve hundred dollars!

MER. Yes, it's a heap of money.

AARON (*oratorically*). Twelve hundred! Why, I wouldn't betray the trust of that little woman for a million!

MER. Fifteen hundred!

AARON. No, sir!

MER. Then I warn you not to interfere. The farm is sold. Legally sold, and it belongs to me. Mrs. Berry has signed the paper.

AARON. Well, I reckon you haven't got it yet.

MER. (*starts to R.*). No, but I will have it!

AARON (*throws him to L., stands before him with folded arms*). I don't reckon you will.

(*Tableau for a few seconds.*)

MER. (*starts to R.*). You let me pass.

AARON (*seizes him; brief struggle at C.*). Not yet!

Enter MRS. B. and GLAD. from R.

MRS. B. Aaron, Aaron, what are you doing?

AARON (*releasing MER., pushing him to L.*). Nothing.

GLAD. (*goes to MER.*). Uncle!

MER. (*pushes her aside*). Let me alone.

(*Positions: MRS. B. down R., with deed of sale in hand,*

AARON at C., MER., L. C., and GLAD. down L.)

MRS. B. Aaron, what does this mean?

AARON. It means that your farm has got oil on it. It's worth a million.

MRS. B. A million? A million what?

AARON. A million dollars.

MRS. B. (*to MER.*). Is this true?

MER. Well, it's a fact that evidences of oil have been found.

MRS. B. And you were trying to get it for twelve hundred dollars.

MER. I did get it. You sold it to me. You signed the paper.

MRS. B. (*tears paper into little bits rapidly; throws it at him*). There's your paper! Now, this farm belongs to me—and you get!

MER. What!

MRS. B. You heard what I said—you get!

MER. Madam, it is true that there is oil on your place. Suppose I make you another offer.

MRS. B. What'll you give?

MER. Twenty thousand dollars.

AARON. Cash money?

MER. Cash money. I have it up-stairs. Gladys, run up and get my little black satchel.

[GLAD. *hurries out at R.*

AARON. Gold?

MER. Gold.

AARON. We ain't takin' no chances.

MRS. B. No, you bet we ain't.

AARON. We'll sell for twenty thousand a half interest in the place, and the rest we'll work on shares.

MER. We'll? What right have you got to dictate?

AARON. That's a fact. I done forgot it wasn't my place.

MRS. B. What he said was all right. I'll sell you a half interest for twenty thousand dollars and the other half we'll work on shares.

MER. It's a bargain. (*Sits at table.*) I'll draw up another contract. (*Writes rapidly.*)

MRS. B. Is that all right, Aaron?

AARON. You bet it is. There ain't no chance to lose thataway.

MRS. B. But twenty thousand dollars is such a lot of money for a lone widow to have all to herself.

AARON. Yes, it is. It'll make you an heiress.

MER. There's the new contract. (*Gives it to MRS. B.*)

MRS. B. (*hands it to AARON*). Is it all right, Aaron?

AARON (*reads it*). Yes, it's all right.

Enter GLAD. from R. with satchel.

GLAD. (*gives it to MER.*). There, Uncle Wilbur.

MER. (*takes out bag of money; opens it*). It's all right. It's a close bargain, but this way we can both make

money. (*Takes out another bag.*) There's twenty thousand dollars. Do you want to count it?

AARON. You bet we do.

(*Sits at table and counts money.*)

MRS. B. Shall I sign this paper now, Aaron?

AARON. Yes, it's all right.

MER. (*crosses to MRS. B., who sits at table, R.*). Sign right there.

MRS. B. (*signs paper with pencil*). Very well. Rosa B. Berry.

MER. Now I'll sign. (*Signs paper.*) There, everything is perfectly legal and aboveboard.

AARON (*hands bag to MRS. B.*). It's all right. There's your twenty thousand.

MRS. B. Oh, I'm so excited. Let's go and look at the oil, Aaron.

MER. Come, I'll show you the place. (*Crosses to L.*)

GLAD. I'm just dying to see real oil coming up out of the ground. Just think, it's worth half a million dollars. Just coming right up out of the ground.

MRS. B. (*crossing to L.*). Oh, I'm going to be a millionairess. I'll move to the city and live in a brownstone front for the rest of my natural life. (*Goes out, L.*)

MER. It's a good thing for both of us. Come, Gladys May, we're on Easy Street at last.

(*Goes out, L., followed by GLAD.*)

AARON (*looks after them*). Well, he's on Easy Street, and Rosy has got twenty thousand dollars in cash. (*Pause.*) I wonder where I come in. She'll never marry me now with all that money. (*Pause.*) I reckon I'm left out in the cold. Oil? (*Laughs.*) It's a good joke on that city feller anyhow. I dumped seven barrels of oil in that old spring yesterday and it cost me 'leven dollars. (*Laughs.*) But it was worth it. It was worth every durned cent jest to see his face. I reckon I'm something of a slicker myself.

CURTAIN

ACT III

SCENE.—*A Chicago cabaret. Interior setting made of fancy screens. Palms and large plants decorate the stage. A few fancy Japanese lanterns may be hung around the stage. Three small tables at rear, with three small seats at each one. Shaded candles on tables. Entrances R. and L.*

(At rise of curtain several guests, male and female, are seen seated at tables, drinking lemonade. Three or four specialties are introduced at this point. If possible open with several bright, snappy, popular songs by chorus. Follow this with a male quartet or a mandolin, ukulele and guitar number. Then a fancy dance, if desired. Then a popular solo, with the guests standing in semi-circle behind soloist and doing some simple gesturing and dance steps. The GIRL IN RED enters and gives this last solo. At the end of it all resume seats. CLARENCE waits on the tables.)

GIRL IN RED *(at c. table, faces audience)*. Now a toast.

GUESTS. Yes, yes, a toast, a toast.

GIRL. To a long life and a happy one; a good song and a rousing one; a brave man and a handsome one; a sweet girl and a modest one; and love and life and laughter and song, we're here to play the whole night long; we'll brighten life before we're gray and turn the night time into day. *(GUESTS applaud.)*

CLAR. The dance is beginning in the ballroom.

GIRL. Then me for the dance. *(Takes partner.)* I'm just dying to do that new fox trot.

GUESTS *(rise and move to L.)*. Yes, yes, the dance.

(Music heard outside at L.)

GIRL (*starts to dance with partner*). Ain't that lovely?

GUESTS (*dancing*). Lovely! (*All dance out at L.*)

Enter MER. and GLAD. from R.

MER. (*sits at table*). This must be the place; there is no other hotel in the neighborhood.

GLAD. (*seated at table*). But how do you know Mrs. Berry is stopping at a hotel?

MER. I've had her shadowed. She does her banking at the Chicago National, and I had a detective follow her.

GLAD. And you think she is living here?

MER. I'm almost sure of it. She gave me the slip three months ago and I haven't been able to get track of her since, until last week at the bank.

GLAD. But will she see you?

MER. She'll have to see me, or go to jail for selling land under false pretenses. Just think I paid her twenty thousand dollars in cash.

GLAD. And there wasn't a drop of oil on the place.

MER. It was salted.

GLAD. Salted? Was there salt there?

MER. No, no; I mean they put a little oil in that spring to lead me on. I thought I was too old a bird to be caught by such a simple trick, but she did it, and I'm out twenty thousand dollars.

GLAD. Just when I thought we were going to be rich. Oh, Uncle Wilbur, it's such a disappointment.

MER. And here she is living here at this expensive hotel on the fat of the land, and on my money, too. Oh, I'll have the law on her. She'll pay me back every cent, with interest, too.

GLAD. But if she don't?

MER. If she don't she'll find herself in jail, that's all.

Enter CLAR. from L. He goes to their table.

CLAR. (*with small pad*). Order, sir?

MER. I don't want anything. Only a little information.

CLAR. Information? (*Writes it on pad.*) Stewed or fried?

MER. I want to know if there is a lady stopping here by the name of Berry.

CLAR. Yes, sir. I believe there is. A Mrs. Rosa Berry, from Oklahoma.

MER. That's the one. Kindly take her my card.

(*Hands card.*)

CLAR. Yes, sir. (*Waits.*)

MER. And hurry up about it.

CLAR. Yes, sir. (*Does not move.*)

MER. Oh, you want a tip?

CLAR. Yes, sir.

MER. (*gives him a dime*). Now hurry up.

CLAR. Yes, sir. (*Walks to L.*) Just a moment, sir. I'll see if the lady is in.

MER. Well, are you going to be all night about it?

CLAR. Yes, sir. [*Exits, L., slowly.*]

GLAD. Uncle Wilbur, there is something familiar about that man.

MER. What man?

GLAD. That waiter.

MER. Well, I should think so. He's entirely too familiar.

GLAD. I mean that I have seen him somewhere before.

MER. Where?

GLAD. He looks like the man who took the room over us at the rooming house.

MER. Do you think so?

GLAD. I am sure of it.

MER. I wonder if he is watching me.

GLAD. Why should he?

MER. Oh, I don't know. I'm nervous lately. Every little thing startles me. Sometimes I think some one is following me all about the town. I seem to hear foot-steps, but I can see no one. But if I stop, they stop; if I go on, they go on. But there is never any one in sight.

GLAD. It's just your nerves, that's all.

MER. I'll be glad when I can get this affair with the Berry widow settled and we can leave Chicago forever.

GLAD. Oh, are we going away?

MER. Yes, to New York. Just as soon as I get my twenty thousand back.

GLAD. Oh, I just love New York. Even Chicago seems awfully provincial. I adore large cities.

Enter CLAR. from L.

MER. Well?

CLAR. Yes, sir, I'm pretty well, thank you.

MER. Did you give the lady my card?

CLAR. Yes, sir. She said for me to show you up. I told her I could do it.

MER. What do you mean?

CLAR. I mean that I'm going to show you up.

MER. Oh, that's all right.

CLAR. Yes, sir. Walk this way, sir. (*Starts to L.*)

GLAD. Shall I go with you, Uncle Wilbur?

MER. Of course. (*They move to L.*)

CLAR. The lady is waiting in her private parlor. This way, sir. [*Exit, L.*]

MER. Now, Gladys May, let me do all the talking. I'll tell her what's what, and if she don't pay me back that money she'll take a little trip to the station house.

GLAD. Oh, Uncle, you are so clever. Wonderful, perfectly wonderful. [*They exeunt at L.*]

AARON (*heard outside at R.*). Here, boy, take my hat and coat, and don't forgit to give 'em back to me neither. That hat cost a dollar and sixty-nine cents down in Punkin Crick, Oklyhomy.

Enter AARON from R. He looks around. Enter CLAR. from L.

CLAR. (*goes to him*). Yes, sir.

AARON. What do you mean, yes, sir?

CLAR. I mean I am ready to serve you. Is there anything you want?

AARON. Waal, I reckon there is. You work around here, sonny?

CLAR. Yes, sir.

AARON. Waal, the first thing I want is to make a complaint agin yer dining-room.

CLAR. Our dining-room?

AARON. Yep. I jist come from in thar. They got the sassiest waiters I ever seen in my born days. If a nigger sassed that way in Texas there'd be sump'm doin' afore nightfall.

CLAR. I'm sorry, sir.

AARON. I didn't like the way them waiters acted. "Come yere," I yelled at one of them. "Get me two soft biled eggs, and don't get fresh!" (*Pause; then holds nose with fingers.*) And he didn't. Oh, them eggs, them eggs. If they was fresh, the hen that laid 'em must have been sick anyhow. I cracked open one and that was enough for me. I called the waiter. "What's the matter," says he, "shall I open the other egg?" "No," I told him, "if you wanten open anything, fer the love of Mike, open the winder."

CLAR. That was too bad.

AARON. Two bad? Yep, both of 'em was bad. You see, I jest dropped up from Oklyhomy yesterday.

CLAR. Oh, you blew in on the night train?

AARON. Yep, I reckon I did. Blew in eighteen dollars and sixty-eight cents.

CLAR. Then you are a guest here at the hotel?

AARON. I reckon I am. But I don't like my room.

CLAR. Don't like it?

AARON. Nope; couldn't sleep. The blamed light burned all night long.

CLAR. (*smiles*). Why didn't you put it out?

AARON. I did try. I blew like thunder, but the durned thing was in a bottle.

CLAR. I'll have that fixed the first thing this afternoon.

AARON. And say, boy, believe me I was lonesome. I wandered all around the city last night not knowing a soul in Chicago. Must 'a' been about twelve o'clock. I got so blamed lonesome that I finally saw a street car marked "This car to the Barns," and I followed the durn car ten miles. But I never saw no barns.

CLAR. Did you travel all the way up from Oklahoma alone?

AARON. Nope. 'Bout forty er fifty people on the train. (*Slight pause.*) Say, I saw a funny thing on the street

to-day. Feller drivin' a great big cart full of water. And the blamed thing was dripping out all over the street. (*Laughs.*) I had a notion to tell him, but I didn't. The durn fool won't have a drop left when he gits home.

CLAR. (*laughs*). You ought to write him a special delivery letter and tell him.

AARON (*looks at him closely*). Say, ain't I seen your face some place before?

CLAR. That's where I usually wear it, before.

AARON (*laughs*). Aw, now you go on. Say, son, were you ever down in Punkin Crick, Oklyhomy?

CLAR. What makes you think so?

AARON. 'Cause you look powerful like a young feller who was down thar the day we found the oil on the Widow Berry's farm.

CLAR. If I tell the truth, 'twill do no harm. I once was down on the Berry farm.

AARON. I knowed it. Specially when you begin to spout poetry. The widder's here in Chicago, ain't she?

CLAR. Yes, sir. She's here at this hotel.

AARON. Yes, I kinder 'lowed she was. Say, boy, you run up and tell her that Aaron Slick from Punkin Crick's down yere waitin' to see her.

CLAR. I'm sorry, Mr. Slick, but she's engaged just now.

AARON (*astonished*). Engaged?

CLAR. Yes, sir. You can't see her now. She's engaged with Mr. Merridew.

AARON. Well, I'll be spanked. Engaged to that old scoundrel. And me coming all the way clean up from Oklyhomy to see her.

CLAR. I'm sorry, Mr. Slick.

AARON. You ain't half as sorry as I am. I always had a hankerin' fer that little woman, boy. Why, I thought some day that I'd lead her into the holy wedlocks of matrimony, and now it's too late. That's jest the trouble with me, son, I'm always jest a leetle bit behind the times. I had a couple of car-load of yearlings to sell, so I jest brought 'em up yere to Chicago myself. Sold 'em, too. (*Takes out big wallet.*) Got nine hundred and eighty-eight dollars right yere jest as slick as a whistle.

And I calculated on gittin' married. (*Long sigh.*) But it ain't to be, I reckon. I ain't no 'count, jest a plain old no-'count hill billy from Punkin Crick. I reckon I'll go back home.

Enter GIRL IN RED from L. with young man. She crosses to R. When she reaches the door at R., she turns, smiles at AARON and exits at R. with her escort.

CLAR. (*laughs*). Well, you seem to have made quite a hit with the Girl in Red.

AARON. Is she one of these yere city slickers, too?

CLAR. Yes, I suppose you might call her that.

AARON. A empire, hay?

CLAR. (*puzzled*). Empire?

AARON. Maybe it's a umpire. You know, one of them gals in the moving pictures that recline on a long chair and make eyes at the other gal's husband.

CLAR. Oh, you mean a vampire.

AARON. I knowed it was some kind of a fish.

CLAR. I believe the Girl in Red has been in the moving picture game.

AARON. Yes, I wouldn't be surprised. Say, young feller, I'd like to meet that gal.

CLAR. You would? Well, if you do, you want to keep your hand on your pocketbook.

AARON. You think she'll slick me, do ye?

CLAR. Well, such things *have* happened, you know.

AARON. Yep, more'n likely, but not to me. I'm something of a slicker myself. Fact is, that's one reason I came to the city. You allers read in the books and funny papers 'bout the city slickers sellin' the innocent old farmers gold bricks, er sump'm like that. Wall, I'm goin' to prove that's all wrong.

CLAR. Going to sell a few gold bricks yourself, are you?

AARON. That's jest exactly what I'm goin' to do. And I'm goin' to show 'em that all the hayseeds don't live in the country.

CLAR. All I can say is to hold onto your roll.

AARON. Don't you worry none about my roll, son. I done told you I had nine hundred and eighty-eight dollars

right yere in this wallet, and I reckon I'll have a heap more'n that when I start back to Punkin Crick. Say, supposin' you mosey up to the Widder Berry's room and let her know her old friend Aaron Slick's down yere. I reckon she'll see me even if she is engaged to that there Merridew.

CLAR. Yes, sir. (*Crosses to L.*) But remember my advice; keep your hand on your money. [*Exits, L.*]

AARON. Oh, I'll do that all right. (*Pauses; looks around.*) And so little Rosy is engaged—and to that there swindler Merridew. Wall, I'd never 'a' thunk it of her, never! (*GIRL IN RED enters from R. Crosses and sits at table. She smiles at AARON. AARON, bashfully.*) Aw, now you go on. (*Crosses and sits at table with her.*)

GIRL. How's things down your way?

AARON. Purty purt, I'm tellin' you. Jest sold a couple of car-load of yearlings and got the nine hundred and eighty-eight dollars right yere in this wallet.

GIRL. How very interesting.

AARON. Yep, it is so. Thought I'd take a look around the town a spell, and if I like it, I reckon I'll buy it.

GIRL. Maybe I could help you. The mayor is a good friend of mine.

AARON. Police judge, too, I reckon.

GIRL. Now, don't get gay.

AARON. Oh, no. I never git gay. (*Sees her hand near his watch pocket; he pulls out watch and puts it in trousers pocket.*) My grandad gimme that watch. Solid gold, too. It don't run much but it's worth a heap of money. He gimme this here necktie pin too. Ain't that grand? (*Shows tie pin.*)

GIRL. Is it a diamond?

AARON. Of course. If it ain't grandad was skun out'a twenty dollars.

GIRL. Don't you think it is about time to order something?

AARON. Yep, I reckon I'd better order the undertaker.

GIRL (*laughs*). You're just full of jokes, ain't you?

AARON. Grandad used to say I was full of prunes. (*Laughs.*) Say, do you know why I'm here in the city?

GIRL. I haven't the least idea.

AARON. Well, I'm a bunco man.

GIRL (*laughs*). A bunco man?

AARON. Yep, I'm goin' to bunco some of these yere city hayseeds outer their cold cash.

GIRL. And how are you going to do it?

AARON. Wall, I ain't decided jest how yet. Maybe you kin help me. Let's think of a plan. (*Both pause, looking up trying to think of a plan. Hold this scene as long as possible. Finally AARON gets an idea, pauses, she looks at him, he shakes his head, and both repeat business of trying to think of something. Note: this is very funny and effective.*) I've got it.

GIRL. Spring it.

AARON. You've lost your hand-bag with all your money in it.

GIRL (*looks at hand-bag, takes roll of money from it, puts it back.*) Oh, no.

AARON. That's what we'll pretend. Then you'll go round cryin' and sayin' that you've lost all your money and I'll take up a collection for you among the guests. They'll come across big and we'll split what we collect. How about it?

GIRL. That's a good scheme. But what will I do with my hand-bag?

AARON. I'll take it for you. (*Puts it in his pocket.*)

(*GUESTS begin to stroll in from R. and L., a few at a time. AARON goes down L., GIRL goes down R.*)

GIRL (*crying*). Oh, I've lost my hand-bag. I've lost it.

AARON (*looking around stage and speaking to guests*). The pore gal's lost her hand-bag. You ain't seen anything of it, have you?

(*All search around stage. Other guests stroll in and join the search. CLAR. enters from L.*)

GIRL (*crying*). All my money. Everything I have on earth. I know I had it only a few minutes ago. (*To CLAR.*) Oh, sir, won't you help me find my hand-bag? All my money.

CLAR. Have you searched all around in here?

GIRL. Yes, everywhere. And I had it just a moment ago.

CLAR. I don't see it anywhere. Maybe some one has stolen it.

AARON. Let us take up a collection for the poor young thing.

CLAR. No one has left the room.

GIRL. Then it's here.

CLAR. I'm willing to be searched.

GUESTS. And I. You can search me. (*Etc.*)

AARON (*down L., shows consternation*). Maybe it's on the floor.

(*All look around.*)

GIRL. It was a red hand-bag and it had fifty dollars in bills in a roll.

CLAR. (*turns pockets inside out*). Well, you see I haven't got it. Now, I'll search the others.

(*Searches guests.*)

AARON. I think I've got to go home.

CLAR. Just a moment.

(*Searches AARON, finds the bag.*)

GIRL. Well, what do you think of that? That's it. See if my fifty dollars are in it.

CLAR. Yes, here they are.

GIRL. I never thought he was a thief. Such a nice looking old man, too.

GUESTS. Shame, shame, call the police. (*Etc.*)

GIRL. And my father's watch isn't here. It's a solid gold watch that my grandad gave him. It doesn't go, but it's solid gold.

CLAR. (*finding watch in AARON's trousers pocket*). Is this it?

GIRL. Yes. Thank you so much. (*Takes her bag and puts watch in it.*) And now my necktie pin. Grandad gave me that. It cost him twenty dollars.

CLAR. (*takes pin from AARON's tie*). I guess this is it.

GIRL. Yes, that's it. (*Puts it in hand-bag.*) That's all, I think. (AARON gives a sigh of relief. GIRL looks in hand-bag.) No, no. My other roll of money is gone. Nine hundred and eighty-eight dollars that father gave me when he sold two car-loads of yearlings. That is missing.

CLAR. (*finds roll on AARON.*) Is this it?

GIRL. Oh, yes. Now, I have everything, I believe. (AARON takes off coat, hands it to GIRL.) No, no, that isn't mine.

AARON. You might jest as well take it.

CLAR. Shall I call the police?

GIRL. No, no, I don't want any scandal. (*Guests begin to leave, a few at a time.*) He seemed like such a nice old gentleman, too. But one can never tell.

AARON. That's right, one can never tell.

CLAR. Shut up, or I'll have you pinched. It's only the generosity of this poor hard-working girl that is saving you. You ought to get down on your knees and thank her.

AARON. Yes, I think I orter. She didn't take the gold outer my two front teeth.

CLAR. And then you'd better beat it.

(*Exits L. with remaining guests.*)

AARON. Say, young woman, I want to shake hands with you. (*Crosses to R. to GIRL.*)

GIRL. Oh, that's all right. It's all in a day's work.

(*Shakes hands with him.*)

AARON (*shaking her hand; her hand-bag, which is on her arm, slips down onto his wrist, she not noticing it.*) Say, if you ever come out to Punkin Crick in the State of Oklyhomy you want'er look me up. You certainly did put it over on me and you're all the candy. (*Looks R.*) See, there's a policeman heading this way.

GIRL (*startled*). A policeman? Where?

(*She runs out at R.*)

AARON (*holds up her hand-bag*). Now who says I ain't a city slicker? (*Crosses to L.*) They got to git up kinder early in the morning when they git ahead of old Aaron Slick from Punkin Crick. (*Struts out at L.*)

Enter SIS from R.

SIS. Oh, dear! Mrs. Berry is busy up-stairs with that old Merridew and the folks are all dancing in there and I'm all alone and lonesome and nobody loves me. I wish I was little Sis Riggs again back on Punkin Crick, where everybody knows everybody else and likes everybody and is just as happy as the day is long. I don't like Chicago and I don't like city folks and I don't like city clothes. (*Long sigh.*) Gee, they're tight! And my feet is all squoze up in these yere shoes and my head hurts where they frizzled my hair and my face hurts where they put beauty powder on it and my back hurts from holdin' my shoulders up straight and I shore wish I was a little country gal again back home. (*Sits at R.*)

Enter MRS. B. from L.

MRS. B. Oh, Sis, the most awful thing has happened. SIS (*goes to her at c.*). Why, what is it?

MRS. B. (*crying*). All my money! Every cent! I've got to pay it back.

SIS. Pay it back? Who to?

MRS. B. To that miserable scallawag, Wilbur Merridew. It turns out there wasn't any oil on my farm at all.

SIS. Well, that ain't your fault, is it?

MRS. B. No, I don't see how it is. He claims I sold him the place on false pretenses.

SIS. Pretenses? I dunno what pretenses is. But it sounds bad.

MRS. B. He says I cheated him. He's up-stairs waiting for me to see the clerk and get my money. He's going to take it all. Oh, I wish I'd never got it at all. I wish I was back home in Punkin Crick.

SIS. How's he goin' to make you pay?

MRS. B. He's going to have me arrested and put in prison. Ain't that awful? Me, who's always been an active member of the Presbyterian Church and been the

president of the Ladies' Aid fer three hull years. In prison! (*Walks up and down, crying and wringing her hands.*) Oh, I dunno what I'll do.

SIS. Say, you jest wait here a minute and lemme go up and give him a kick on the shins.

MRS. B. Sis, that ain't ladylike.

SIS. Well, I ain't no lady, I'm jest a country gal and I reckon I kin kick him if I want to. Then he'll put me in jail alongside of you. (*Crosses to L.*) Anyhow, I'll get the good of a big Oklyhomy scrap if it's my last act. Where is he? Where is he? (*Runs out at L.*)

MRS. B. (*in chair*). Oh, I'm paid for all my folly. I thought there couldn't be anything better than living in the city dressed up like a duchess and waited on like a queen, but I've found out my mistake. Why, I don't even dare to wipe my face fer fear my complexion will come off. And I'm always making mistakes. I'd give a hundred-dollar bill to be back in my own kitchen with Aaron Slick eatin' punkin pie and pork dumplings and beans I cooked myself, and no one a-lookin' on and stuffin' their handkerchiefs in their mouths to keep from laughin' jest because I drunk out of the finger bowl. How did I know it wasn't a new fangled tumbler? And now I've got to pay back all my money and go back home. Well, I'm tickled clean to Jerusalem about going back home anyhow.

Enter CLAR. from L.

CLAR. Beg pardon, Mrs. Berry, but there's a party outside who desires to see you. He wouldn't give me a card.

Enter AARON from L.

AARON. No, you bet he wouldn't; I don't play keerds, 'cause I'm a church member in good standing, and don't ye forgit it. Excuse me, lady, I'm lookin' fer Mrs. Rosy Berry; she's a old time friend of mine from Punkin Crick down in Oklyhomy. You don't happen to know her, do ye? [*Exit CLAR., L.*]

MRS. B. (*moves toward him tremblingly*). Why, Aaron, don't you know me? I'm Rosy Berry.

AARON (*looks at her*). You ain't neither.

MRS. B. I am.

AARON (*looks at her through spectacles*). Well, I'll be spanked!

MRS. B. Just to think you didn't recognize me.

AARON. It ain't possible.

MRS. B. Oh, Aaron, don't look at me like that. I am Rosy Berry; I've jest been made over, that's all.

AARON. Made over?

MRS. B. All city folks have to be made over.

AARON. Then you'd better unmake yourself, Rosy Berry. I'm astonished at ye. With paint on yer face and false hair that looks like a brush heap stuck on yer head and all squoze up in a fifteen-year-old gal's dress that's too short up above and too long behind.

MRS. B. Aaron, this is my coming-out dress.

AARON. I should say it was. You're pretty near out of it now. Looks to me like the suspenders busted, er sump'm. What do you reckon the preacher er the deacon er the Ladies' Aid down in Punkin Crick would say ef they saw you thataway?

MRS. B. (*crying*). Oh, Aaron, don't, don't. Things are hard enough for me as it is.

AARON. Why, I thought things was pretty easy. I jest heard you was goin' to be married.

MRS. B. Married?

AARON. To Mr. Merridew.

MRS. B. There ain't a word of truth in it.

AARON. The waiter said you was engaged with him.

MRS. B. Only to talk over some business.

AARON. Then you ain't engaged to be married?

MRS. B. No.

AARON (*cowboy whoop*). Whoop-ee! (*Takes her hands.*) Rosy, I've come all the way from Punkin Crick, Oklyhomy, to tell you — (*Pauses.*) Pshaw, I ain't a-goin' to tell you nothing. You're rich and I'm poor. You'd never want to come back to Punkin Crick nohow.

MRS. B. Aaron, I got enough of the city to last me the rest of my natural life. Won't you say you forgive me and take me back home? And Wilbur Merridew can have the money.

AARON. What money?

MRS. B. The money he paid me for the farm.

Enter MER., followed by GLAD. and SIS, all from L.

MER. Well, have you got the money?

MRS. B. (*at R. C.*). Not yet, but I'll get it for you.

MER. (*at R. C.*). You'd better.

SIS (*down R.*). Aw, tie a tin can on that rough stuff.

GLAD. (*staring at SIS with eye-glasses*). How vulgar! How excessively crude!

SIS (*shakes her fist at her*). Don't you get fresh with me, Miss High and Mighty, er I'll chase you worser'n Old Nick did down on the farm.

(GLAD. *turns her back on her.*)

MER. I've waited for my money long enough. You pay me now and pay me every cent you owe. It amounts to nearly twenty-one thousand dollars.

MRS. B. But I've spent nearly three thousand.

MER. Spent it? Spent my money! Then I won't settle with you at all. I'll take it to the courts.

MRS. B. No, no. Don't take me to the courts. Don't have me arrested. Ain't I got no friends on earth? Ain't there no one I can turn to?

AARON. Yep, turn to Aaron Slick from Punkin Crick.

SIS (*rushes to him*). Oh, Mr. Slick! (*Hugs him.*)

MER. What are you doing here?

AARON (*crosses to C., faces MER.*). Oh, jest foolin' around as usual. Now, what's all the trouble about? What you pestering Rosy fer?

MER. I think you know what for. She sold me a half share in her farm under false pretenses.

AARON. Jest what was them false pretenses?

MER. She claimed there was oil on the place.

AARON. So there was. That spring was jest naturally full of oil. I reckon I orter know.

MER. But she overvalued the land.

AARON. Oh, that ain't nothin'. Folks is doin' that every day. And come to think about it, I don't believe Rosy ever pretended there was oil on the place. She didn't know nothing about it till you told her.

MER. Then who put the oil in the spring? Who, I say?

AARON (*laughs*). I like to hear you say who that-away, mister. We got a great big hoot owl down on Punkin Crick who says who jest like you do. Shouldn't wonder if you all ain't related. (*Laughs.*)

MER. (*turns away from him*). Bah!

AARON. Got a old sheep that says bah, too.

MER. This is a trick to rob me of my money. I believe you are all in the plot.

GLAD. Of course they are.

SIS. Keep still. Back to your corner, till they call your name.

MRS. B. Aaron, is it true that there is no oil on my place?

AARON. Yes'm, I reckon it is. See here, mister, you ain't got nothin' on us, but if you want to sell me that half share of Rosy's farm fer nine hundred and eighty-eight dollars, I got the cash right here.

MER. I'll do it.

Enter CLAR., L.

CLAR. Oh, no, you won't.

MER. What do you mean?

CLAR. I mean that you are under arrest, Wilbur Merridew, for that little deal out in Iowa two years ago. I've been after you for a good long time but at last I've got the goods on you.

MER. But let me explain.

CLAR. (*leads him to R.*). You can do your explaining at the police station.

GLAD. Oh, Uncle Merridew, what shall I do now?

MER. Go back to your husband in Alton. I think I'll be busy for a few weeks.

CLAR. Maybe for a few years.

(Leads him off at R.)

GLAD. And I won't be a rich lady after all.

[Exits at R., sadly.]

AARON (*goes to MRS. B.*). Well, there goes all your trouble.

MRS. B. I'll send him his money to-morrow. All of it, if I have to mortgage the farm. And then I'll go home.

SIS. You and me both.

AARON. I reckon you'll find me round about some-
wheres near. (*Enter GIRL IN RED from R. She crosses
to L. at back.*) Hey, there, wait a minute. I've got
something that belongs to you.

GIRL. My hand-bag?

AARON. Yep. I done took my own contraptions out,
but everything that belongs to you I reckon you'll find
jest where you left it.

GIRL (*shakes hands with him*). You're a pretty good
old scout after all. (*Crosses to L.*) And you're not
nearly as green as you look, in fact I think you're a
slicker. [*Exit, L.*]

MRS. B. Aaron Slick, who was that young woman?

AARON (*looks at her, pauses, smiles*). Oh, she's a
friend of mine.

MRS. B. (*sniffs*). Humph!

SIS (*sniffs*). Humph, humph, right in the same place.

AARON. Jealous, by thunder.

MRS. B. I ain't either. I ain't got the right.

AARON (*goes to her, takes her hands*). Do you want
the right, Rosy?

MRS. B. Well,—er—I — (*Pauses; turns to SIS.*)
Sis Riggs, what are you looking at? Go up-stairs and get
my coat and hat and pack my trunk.

SIS. Pack yer trunk? What fer?

MRS. B. 'Cause I'm going back to Oklyhomy, that's
what fer.

SIS. Gee whiz, I'm so glad I could kiss a Dutchman.
Goin' back home! Hurray! (*Runs out at R.*)

MRS. B. Yes, Aaron, we'll go back to Oklyhomy, back
to Punkin Crick.

AARON. But you ain't told me you was goin' to marry
me yet.

MRS. B. You ain't asked me yet.

AARON. Will ye?

MRS. B. Yep!

(*He embraces her.*)

CURTAIN

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By Mansfield Scott

Author of "The Submarine Shell," "The Air-Spy," etc.

Eight male, four female characters. Costumes, modern; scenery, two easy interiors. Plays a full evening. Royalty for amateur performance, \$10.00 for the first and \$5.00 each for subsequent performances by the same company. Free for school performance. George Clifford, incapacitated for service at the front, employs his great talents as a conjurer to raise money for the soldiers. He is utilized by Inspector Steele, of the U. S. Secret Service, in a plan to discover certain foreign spies. The plan goes wrong and involves seven persons in suspicion of a serious crime. Clifford's clever unravelling of this tangled skein constitutes the thrilling plot of this play, the interest of which is curiously like that of the popular "Thirteenth Chair." This is not a "war-play" save in a very remote and indirect way, but a clever detective story of absorbing interest. Strongly recommended.

Price, 35 cents

CHARACTERS

INSPECTOR MALCOM STEELE.	DRISCOLL WELLS.
GEORGE CLIFFORD.	DOCTOR GORDON PEAK.
CAPTAIN FRANK DRUMMOND	DETECTIVE WHITE.
GLEASON.	MARION ANDERSON.
LIEUTENANT HAMILTON WAR-	EDITH ANDERSON.
WICK.	ELLEN GLEASON.
COLONEL WILLARD ANDERSON.	DOROTHY ELMSTROM.

SYNOPSIS

ACT I.—The home of Colonel Anderson (Friday evening).
ACT II.—The office of Inspector Steele (Saturday afternoon).
ACT III.—The same as Act II (Saturday evening).

THE OTHER VOICE

A Play in One Act

By S. vK. Fairbanks

Three voices, preferably male, are employed in this little novelty which is intended to be presented upon a dark stage upon which nothing is actually visible save starlight. It was originally produced at Workshop 47, Cambridge, where its effective distillation of the essential oil of tragedy was curiously successful. An admirable item for any programme seeking variety of material and effect. Naturally no costumes nor scenery are required, save a drop carrying stars and possibly a city sky-line. Plays ten minutes only; royalty, \$5.00.

Price, 25 cents

MUCH ADO ABOUT BETTY

A Comedy in Three Acts

By *Walter Ben Hare*

Ten male, twelve female characters, or seven males and seven females by doubling. Costumes, modern; scenery, two easy interiors. Plays a full evening. Betty, a moving picture star, going south on a vacation, loses her memory from the shock of a railway accident, and is identified as a rival, Violet Ostrich, from a hand-bag that she carries. In this character she encounters the real Violet, who has just eloped with Ned O'Hare, and mixes things up sadly both for herself and the young couple. An exceptionally bright, clever and effective play that can be highly recommended. Good Negro, Irish and eccentric comedy parts.

Price, 35 cents

CHARACTERS

LIN LEONARD, *Betty's one best bet.*
MAJOR JARTREE, *of Wichita, not only bent, but crooked.*

NED O'HARE, *a jolly young honeymooner.*

MR. E. Z. OSTRICH, *who has written a wonderful picture-play.*

DR. MCNUTT, *solid ivory from the neck up.*

JIM WILES, *a high-school senior*

ARCHIE, *a black bell-boy at the Hotel Poinsettia.*

OFFICER RILEY, *who always does his duty.*

OFFICER DUGAN, *from the Emerald Isle.*

MR. EBENEZER O'HARE, *a sick man and a submerged tenth*

MRS. EBENEZER O'HARE, *"Birdie," the other nine-tenths.*

AUNT WINNIE, *Betty's chaperone.*

LIZZIE MONAHAN, *Betty's maid, with a vivid imagination.*

ETHEL KOHLER, *a high-school admirer of Betty.*

VIOLET OSTRICH, *a film favorite, Ned's bride.*

MRS. K. M. DIGGINS, *a guest at the Hotel Poinsettia.*

DAFFODIL DIGGINS, *her daughter, "Yes, Mamma!"*

MISS CHIZZLE, *one of the North Georgia Chizzles.*

PEARLIE BROWN, *Violet's maid, a widow of ebony hue.*

VIOLET, *Violet Ostrich's little girl aged seven.*

DIAMOND, *Pearlie's little girl aged six and*

BETTY, *the star of the Movagraph Co.*

Jartree may double Dugan; Ned may double Riley; Jim may double Archie; Mrs. O'Hare may double Ethel; Aunt Winnie may double Pearlle and Lizzie may double Miss Chizzle, thus reducing the cast to seven males and seven females. The two children have no lines to speak.

SYNOPSIS

ACT I. Betty's apartments near New York. Married in haste.

ACT II. Parlor D of the Hotel Poinsettia, Palm Beach, Fla. Three days later. Betty loses her memory.

ACT III. Same scene as Act II. A full honeymoon.

JUST A LITTLE MISTAKE

A Comedy in One Act

By *Elizabeth Gale*

One male, five female characters, or can be played by all girls. Costumes, modern; scenery, an easy interior. Plays forty minutes. Mrs. Ball receives a cablegram from her sister Lucy stating that Jerry will arrive that day and begging her to be cordial. Mrs. Ball then goes out to hire a cook, leaving three young friends to receive the unknown guest. The cook, sent down from the agency in haste, is greeted and entertained as Jerry and when the real Jerry (Miss Geraldine Take) arrives she is sent out to the kitchen. After considerable confusion and excitement she is discovered to be the "Little Miss Take." Strongly recommended.

Price, 25 cents

Plays for Junior High Schools

	Males	Females	Time	Price
Sally Lunn	3	4	1½ hrs.	25c
Mr. Bob	3	4	1½ "	25c
The Man from Brandon	3	4	½ "	25c
A Box of Monkeys	2	3	1¼ "	25c
A Rice Pudding	2	3	1¼ "	25c
Class Day	4	3	¾ "	25c
Chums	3	2	¾ "	25c
An Easy Mark	5	2	½ "	25c
Pa's New Housekeeper	3	2	1 "	25c
Not On the Program	3	3	¾ "	25c
The Cool Collegians	3	4	1½ "	25c
The Elopement of Ellen	4	3	2 "	35c
Tommy's Wife	3	5	1½ "	35c
Johnny's New Suit	2	5	¾ "	25c
Thirty Minutes for Refreshments	4	3	½ "	25c
West of Omaha	4	3	¾ "	25c
The Flying Wedge	3	5	¾ "	25c
My Brother's Keeper	5	3	1½ "	25c
The Private Tutor	5	3	2 "	35c
Me an' Otis	5	4	2 "	25c
Up to Freddie	3	6	1¼ "	25c
My Cousin Timmy	2	8	1 "	25c
Aunt Abigail and the Boys	9	2	1 "	25c
Caught Out	9	2	1½ "	25c
Constantine Pueblo Jones	10	4	2 "	35c
The Cricket On the Hearth	6	7	1½ "	25c
The Deacon's Second Wife	6	6	2 "	35c
Five Feet of Love	5	6	1½ "	25c
The Hurdy Gurdy Girl	9	9	2 "	35c
Camp Fidelity Girls	1	11	2 "	35c
Carrotty Nell		15	1 "	25c
A Case for Sherlock Holmes		10	1½ "	35c
The Clancey Kids		14	1 "	25c
The Happy Day		7	½ "	25c
I Grant You Three Wishes		14	½ "	25c
Just a Little Mistake	1	5	¾ "	25c
The Land of Night		18	1¼ "	25c
Local and Long Distance	1	6	½ "	25c
The Original Two Bits		7	½ "	25c
An Outsider		7	½ "	25c
Oysters		6	½ "	25c
A Pan of Fudge		6	½ "	25c
A Peck of Trouble		5	½ "	25c
A Precious Pickle		7	½ "	25c
The First National Boot	7	2	1 "	25c
His Father's Son	14		1¼ "	35c
The Turn In the Road	9		1½ "	25c
A Half Back's Interference	10		¾ "	25c
The Revolving Wedge	5	3	1 "	25c
Mose	11	10	1½ "	25c

BAKER, Hamilton Place, Boston, Mass.

Plays and Novelties That Have Been "Winners"

	Males	Females	Time	Price	Royalty
Camp Fidelity Girls		11	2½ hrs.	35c	None
Anita's Trial		11	2 "	35c	"
The Farmerette		7	2 "	35c	"
Behind the Scenes		12	1½ "	35c	"
The Camp Fire Girls		15	2 "	35c	"
A Case for Sherlock Holmes		10	1½ "	35c	"
The House in Laurel Lane		6	1½ "	25c	"
Her First Assignment		10	1 "	25c	"
I Grant You Three Wishes		14	½ "	25c	"
Joint Owners in Spain		4	½ "	35c	\$5.00
Marrying Money		4	½ "	25c	None
The Original Two Bits		7	½ "	25c	"
The Over-Alls Club		10	½ "	25c	"
Leave it to Polly		11	1½ "	35c	"
The Rev. Peter Brice, Bachelor		7	½ "	25c	"
Miss Fearless & Co.		10	2 "	35c	"
A Modern Cinderella		16	1½ "	35c	"
Theodore, Jr.		7	½ "	25c	"
Rebecca's Triumph		16	2 "	35c	"
Aboard a Slow Train in Mizzoury	8	14	2½ "	35c	"
Twelve Old Maids		15	1 "	25c	"
An Awkward Squad	8		¼ "	25c	"
The Blow-Up of Algernon Blow	8		½ "	25c	"
The Boy Scouts	20		2 "	35c	"
A Close Shave	6		½ "	25c	"
The First National Boot	7		1 "	25c	"
A Half-Back's Interference	10		¾ "	25c	"
His Father's Son	14		1¾ "	35c	"
The Man With the Nose	8		¾ "	25c	"
On the Quiet	12		1½ "	35c	"
The People's Money	11		1¾ "	25c	"
A Regular Rah! Rah! Boy	14		1¾ "	35c	"
A Regular Scream	11		1¾ "	35c	"
Schmerecase in School	9		1 "	25c	"
The Scoutmaster	10		2 "	35c	"
The Tramps' Convention	17		1½ "	25c	"
The Turn in the Road	9		1½ "	25c	"
Wanted—a Pitcher	11		½ "	25c	"
What They Did for Jenkins	14		2 "	25c	"
Aunt Jerusha's Quilting Party	4	12	1¼ "	25c	"
The District School at Blueberry Corners	12	17	1 "	25c	"
The Emigrants' Party	24	10	1 "	25c	"
Miss Prim's Kindergarten	10	11	1½ "	25c	"
A Pageant of History	Any number	2	"	35c	"
The Revel of the Year	"	"	¾ "	25c	"
Scenes in the Union Depot	"	"	1 "	25c	"
Taking the Census in Bingville	14	8	1½ "	25c	"
The Village Post-Office	22	20	2 "	35c	"
O'Keefe's Circuit	12	8	1½ "	35c	"

BAKER, Hamilton Place, Boston, Mass.

No Plays Exchanged
**BAKER'S NOVELTY
PLAYS**

Comical Country Cousins

Price, 25 Cents



WALTER H. BAKER COMPANY
BOSTON

Plays for Colleges and High Schools

	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Price</i>	<i>Royalty</i>
The Air Spy	12	4	1½ hrs.	35c	\$10.00
Bachelor Hall	8	4	2 "	35c	\$5.00
The College Chap	11	7	2½ "	35c	Free
The Colonel's Maid	6	3	2 "	35c	"
Daddy	4	4	1½ "	35c	"
The Deacon's Second Wife	6	6	2½ "	35c	"
The District Attorney	10	6	2 "	35c	"
The Dutch Detective	5	5	2 "	35c	"
At the Sign of the Shooting Star	10	10	2 "	35c	"
The Elopement of Ellen	4	3	2 "	35c	"
Engaged by Wednesday	5	11	1½ "	35c	"
The Chuzzlewitts, or Tom Pinch	15	6	2¼ "	35c	"
For One Night Only	5	4	2 "	25c	"
Hamilton	11	5	2 "	60c	\$25.00
Constantine Pueblo Jones	10	4	2¼ "	35c	Free
Excuse Me	4	6	1¼ "	35c	"
The Hoodoo	6	12	2 "	35c	"
The Hurdy Gurdy Girl	9	9	2 "	35c	"
Katy Did	4	8	1½ "	35c	"
Let's Get Married	3	5	2 "	60c	\$10.00
London Assurance	10	3	2 "	25c	Free
Lost a Chaperon	6	9	2 "	35c	"
A Foul Tip	7	3	2 "	35c	"
The Man Who Went	7	3	2½ "	35c	\$10.00
The Man Without a Country	46	5	1½ "	25c	Free
Master Pierre Patella	4	1	1½ "	60c	"
How Jim Made Good	7	3	2 "	25c	"
Just Plain Mary	7	13	2 "	35c	"
Line Busy	5	19	1½ "	35c	"
Mr. Bob	3	4	1½ "	25c	"
Mrs. Briggs of the Poultry Yard	4	7	2 "	35c	"
Nathan Hale	15	4	2½ "	60c	\$10.00
Patty Makes Things Hum	4	6	2 "	35c	Free
Professor Pepp	8	8	2½ "	35c	"
A Regiment of Two	6	4	2 "	35c	"
The Private Tutor	5	3	2 "	35c	"
The Rivals	9	5	2½ "	25c	"
Silas Marner	19	4	1½ "	25c	"
When a Feller Needs a Friend	5	5	2¼ "	35c	\$10.00
Sally Lunn	3	4	1½ "	25c	Free
The School for Scandal	12	4	2½ "	25c	"
She Stoops to Conquer	15	4	2½ "	25c	"
Step Lively	4	10	2 "	35c	"
The Submarine Shell	7	4	2 "	35c	\$10.00
The Thirteenth Star		9	1½ "	35c	Free
The Time of His Life	6	3	2½ "	35c	"
Tommy's Wife	3	5	1½ "	35c	"
The Twig of Thorn	6	7	1½ "	75c	"
The Amazons	7	5	2½ "	60c	\$10.00
The Conjuror	8	4	2¼ "	35c	\$10.00

BAKER, Hamilton Place, Boston, Mass.

The Comical Country Cousins

A Humorous, Patriotic Entertainment
in One Act

By

LIEUT. BEALE CORMACK

*Author of "The American Flag," "Aaron Slick
from Punkin Crick," etc.*

NOTE

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BOSTON
WALTER H. BAKER & CO.

1921

The Comical Country Cousins

CHARACTERS

AUNT OPHELIA, *the boss.*
COUSIN SUKEY, *from Sidecomb Corners.*
COUSIN MOLLIE, *who kin pian like sixty.*
COUSIN DELIA, *from Doughnut Crossing.*
COUSIN SARAH, *looking for a man.*
COUSIN JANE, *who's got city ways.*
COUSIN CECELIA, *from Skinnyapolis.*
COUSIN SAMANTHY, *put' nigh eighty.*
SIS HOPKINS, *smitten with Bilious.*
COUSIN MERINDY, *who sings like a bird.*
MA'Y JINNIE, *a hefty "cullud" lady.*
TOPSY, *a li'l pickaninny.*

SCENE.—Any platform.



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SUGGESTIONS

AUNT OPHELIA.—This is the leading part and should be played by a lady with a good speaking voice. Plain old-time costume adorned with many lodge badges.

SUKEY.—Old style costume trimmed with gaudy artificial flowers and bunches of colored ribbons and lace.

MOLLIE.—Old time evening dress, large fan.

DELIA and SARAH.—Funny old-maidish costumes, hair dressed in an exaggerated fashion.

JANE and CECILIA.—First costumes, old style dresses and bonnets. Second costumes, long calico dresses, white aprons in front and in back. White kerchiefs crossed in front and behind, so that the girls present exactly the same appearance going and coming. White cotton gloves. Each girl wears two false faces, exactly alike, one over the face and one on back of head. These faces are separated by a large, stiff white frill that stands straight up and runs from ear to ear. These costumes should be worn at rehearsals to get the right effect.

SAMANTHY.—Very old lady in black. White hair. Cane, spectacles.

SIS.—First costume, striped stockings, boy's shoes, calico dress, red bandana handkerchief folded in square and pinned to front of dress with safety pin. Hair wired out in pigtails sticking out from head. Second costume, man's army overcoat and army hat. She carries a large flag.

MERINDY.—Neat, old style costume.

MA'Y JINNIE.—Padded to look very fat. Dark skirt; red calico waist, soiled apron, basket on arm, gaudy hood covering head, ears and neck. Choose an actress who can give the negro dialect well. To make up, have the face dry then take a bit of prepared cork the size of a walnut and blacken the face, using a little water on the cork. Leave a white line around the mouth. Use no grease or cold cream and no red paint. This make-up is easy to remove with soap and water. Black gloves.

TOPSY.—Short tattered dress and old torn sunbonnet. Black up like Ma'y Jinnie. Black gloves.

The Comical Country Cousins

SCENE.—*A platform with eleven chairs arranged in a semicircle facing the audience. Piano and stool down R. Screen at the L. side of the platform where the performers may change their costumes. No curtains are necessary. A telephone stands on the piano; this may be a fake instrument but the green cord, etc., should give the proper illusion.*

(MA'Y JINNIE and TOPSY are concealed behind the screen at L., the other characters are concealed in the rear of the audience-room. When the play is ready to start a concealed clock strikes eight loudly. On its last stroke AUNT OPHELIA calls out loudly.)

AUNT OPHELIA. Are you all ready?

OTHERS. Sure we are.

AUNT. Then let her go.

(*All sing loudly to the tune of "Battle Hymn of the Republic," page 63, The Golden Book.*)

OPENING SONG

(*By Concealed Chorus.*)

Everybody's ready, let the festival begin,
Folks are waitin' anxiously to see their kith and kin,
All the Country Cousins from the hills are comin' in,

As we go marching on.
Come along with Aunt Ophelia,
Sukey, Mollie and Cecelia,
Sarah, Jane and little Delia,
We're all a-marching on.

Country Cousins from the east and cousins from the
 west,
 Comic Country Cousins, they're the ones you like the
 best,
 Some are dressed in city clothes and some are coun-
 try dressed,
 But all are marching on.
 Come along with Aunt Ophelia,
 Sukey, Mollie and Cecelia,
 Sarah, Jane and little Delia,
 We're all a-marching on.

(AUNT OPHELIA and SUKEY appear at the rear of the audience-room and slowly start down the aisle toward the platform.)

AUNT *(looking around)*. Well, well, Sukey, we got a pretty good crowd out to-night. Shouldn't be surprised if we wouldn't make quite a little sum of money. See anybody you know?

SUKEY *(points to some one in the audience)*. There's ————. *(Calling the person by correct name.)*

AUNT. Where? I don't see her.

SUKEY. Right there, and I do declare if she ain't got on a new dress.

AUNT *(recognizing her)*. Howdy, ————. Glad to see you out to-night. How're all the folks over your way? My, how them children of yours do grow. You're looking right spry, too. *(Recognizes a man.)* Howdy, Mr. ————. I certainly am surprised to see you here. I heerd you was down sick fer the past two weeks with the toothache, or sump'm.

(They advance toward the platform.)

SUKEY. Laws, if there ain't ————. Good-evening, Mrs. ————. I been aimin' to come over and see you fer the past three months to bring back that dress I borrowed off'n you to go to ————'s party. But it seems like I never git no time to go nowheres, me bein' so busy

entertainin' the public. (*Turns.*) And there's the preacher.

AUNT. Why, so it is. Good-evening, Brother ———. We're certainly proud to see you here at our entertainment. We want you to make yourself right at home and laugh right out loud jest like you was settin' down to a chicken dinner.

SUKEY. Yes, and you want to clap your hands, too, if you like our performance.

AUNT. That's right. Clap right out loud, too. 'Cause all the rest of the folks will be waitin' to see how you act before they start to clap themselves. They ain't real sure it's proper.

SUKEY. Oh, there's Mary. For the land sakes! She's got a beau. (*By this time they are at the platform.*)

AUNT. Wait till I see if they've got the piano in tune. (*Sits at piano and sings.*) Do, mi, sol, do. (*Plays these notes.*) Yes, it's pretty good. Sit right down there, Cousin Sukey, while I speak to 'em and interduce ourselves.

SUKEY (*sits in third chair from R.*). Cut it short, Aunt Ophelia. Folks is beginnin' to fidget already.

AUNT (*comes to front center and addresses the audience*). Ladies and gals, sisters and fellow-women, females in gineral (*pauses and glances sharply around*), and them human insects you got with you, referring to the men. Now I ain't got no use fer the men, seeing as how one of 'em promised to marry me oncet and then changed his mind, but you are welcome here to-night—one and all, great and small, and ef you don't have a good time and enjoy yourselves it won't be our fault, but jist your own stubborn dispositions. In behalf of the Comical Country Cousins I bid you welcome. We'll do our best to please and fully expect you to do your part by laughing with us, applauding our efforts and having a good time in gineral. You're goin' to have before your astonished gaze this evening the grandest aggregation of superabundant talent that ever aggregated in your midst. We've come to enlighten you, to edify you, to eddicate you and to demoralize you, one and all. The Comical Coun-

try Cousins have appeared before all the crowned heads of Africky and half the bald heads of Ameriky. I notice we've got a few of the latter present with us to-night. (*MOLLIE appears at the rear of the audience-room.*) If you will all scrunch your necks a little bit and look back there by the door you'll see advancing down the aisle, like a lily bud blown along by the April breeze, Cousin Mollie McGinty, our musical prodigy. (*MOLLIE comes down the aisle.*) She's jest as full of music as a cat is full of fur; she pians and organs all day long and folks say she makes music all night in her sleep. In fact she's one of the most talented music-makers that ever caused the neighbors to send fer the police to stop the racket. (*MOLLIE ascends the platform.*) Cousin Mollie was eddicated on the piano when she was only three years old. Allow me to present our little musical masterpiece to you; this is Cousin Mollie McGinty. (*MOLLIE curtseys to the ground first to the audience and then to AUNT.*) She will now demonstrate her ability as a pianner. Of course if the organ was workin' she'd play on that, as she organs like a queen, but she kin piann jist as good as she kin organ. Now any one in the audience will kindly call out the name of any selection that was ever writ and Cousin Mollie will perform it. Come now, speak up, any one at all. Call out a piece and she will play it as it never was played before.

(*If any one calls out a selection MOLLIE plays it if she can, making mistakes, playing now and then with only one finger, etc., but with all the gesticulation of a Paderewski. If MOLLIE does not know the selection called for, she plays any simple tune, such as "Turkey in the Straw" or "Home Sweet Home." If no selection is called for, have one of the cousins in the rear call out the name of a piece, but give the audience time to call one of their own. The selection played should be very short. While MOLLIE is playing AUNT sits on the sixth chair from the R.—the middle chair.*)

SUKEY (*comes down c. at end of playing*). Now

wasn't that superb? The selection you just heard was Cousin Mollie's example of the She's-a-nut-sky School. Now as an example of the Katch-a-koff-sky School she will flavor you with Shovel-o-whisky's celebrated etude, Ish Ga Bibble in B Flat A Major, his last composition before he was executed for cruelty to animals.

(Resumes her seat while MOLLIE curtseys low and plays the same piece as before. During the playing SUKEY and AUNT keep time with their feet.)

AUNT (*comes forward*). Our next number presents four of our famous cousins all at once. Prepare yourselves for a dazzling array of beauty such as was never seen before in this country er anywhere else. Cousin Sarah, Cousin Delia, Cousin Jane and Cousin Cecelia, the million-dollar beauties. Mollie, kindly render on the piano The Maiden's Prayer, soft and trimbly, as the cousins advance.

(MOLLIE plays the Wedding March, "Here Comes the Bride," as the COUSINS DELIA, SARAH, JANE and CECELIA slowly walk down the aisle, arms clasped on breasts and heads bowed. They ascend the platform, march to the front and curtsey to the ground. The music changes to "Try, Try Again," page 5, The Golden Book, as the four cousins sing slowly and plaintively to the audience. They gesticulate in unison and prolong the vowel sounds in the song. This song is simply a take-off and cannot be exaggerated too much.)

POOR OLD MAIDS

Here we be all sad and lorn, poor old maids,
Wish we never had been born, poor old maids,
Standin' up here in a row,
Watchin' fellers come and go,
Nary one will be our beau, poor old maids.

Dressed in yaller, pink and blue, poor old maids,
We can boil and bake and stew, poor old maids.
Oh, you cutie, over there, (*Point.*)
That boy with the fuzzy hair—
Do you want a wife, so fair? Poor old maids.

Each would like to be a bride, poor old maids!
With a bridegroom by her side, poor old maids.
Some gals want a dress and fan,
Some an auto spick and span,
All we want's a man, *man*, MAN! Poor old maids.

Folks all say we are a fright, poor old maids.
No one ever hugs us tight, poor old maids.
Alas, we don't know what to do,
We're gittin' old, most forty-two,
And we can't help it, boo, hoo, hoo! Poor old
maids!

(*All weep loudly and sit down, DELIA and SARAH in the fourth and fifth chairs from R., JANE and CELIA in the seventh and eighth. If an encore is demanded they repeat the last two stanzas.*)

SUKEY (*comes forward*). Now you're goin' to get a real treat. Here comes Cousin Samanthy. (*SAMANTHY comes down the aisle.*) Samanthy's purt' nigh eighty years old, but she's jist as spry as a young kitten. Ain't you, Samanthy?

SAMANTHY (*half-way down the aisle*). You bet I be.

SUKEY. She comes from —— (*name some near-by town*), but you'd never guess it to look at her. Sometimes she appears almost as intelligent as a human being. Here, I'll help you up on the platform. (*Helps her up.*) Ladies and men, this is old Cousin Samanthy.

(*SUKEY takes her seat.*)

SAMANTHY (*comes to front of platform*). Howdy, folks. I swan to gracious I come purty nigh not gittin' here. I been to the old settler's meetin' over in the grove, and it like to done me up. I'll tell ye about the

OLD SETTLER'S MEETIN'

Been to the old settler's meetin' !
And of all the reg'lar beatin'
Times I think it beat 'em holler.
Like to bust my new lace collar
Into flinters—I jest laffed
Tell I thought I'd go plum daft.
Who was there? Now ast me that—
Tell you who *wa'n't* there right spat!
Ever one I ever knowed
Come by the load, down every road.
I shuck hands and shuck and shuck,
Thought 'at it 'ud be my luck
To shake my hand off, then and there.
County fair was jist nowhere!

Old Miss Perkins and old Si Crumm,
Jimmy Hanks, of course *he'd* come,
Old Squire Pruitt and his darter,
Mary Brown and Isaac Carter,
All the Jinkses, old Aunt Sue,
Womern, children, all come too;
Amos Talbot jest sailed in
Pullin' the long beard on his chin,
Old Jake Martin, you know how—
Chawin' tobaccer like a muley cow!
Well, I 'ist can't name 'em through,
There was jist a reg'lar sloo
Of the Hubbles, Potters, Skinners,
With their fam'lies and their dinners!
An' them dinners 'ud cure sore eyes:
Yaller leg chickens an' punkin pies—
Dumplins big as a feller's head,
Honey an' old salt-risin' bread.

Right on the platform 'fore our eyes,
Uncle Johnny took the prize
As the oldest settler here,
And he danced a hornpipe theer.

Yessir, and the man kin tell more lies,
'N any feller any*whur*.
Killed more Injuns, wolves and bars,
Fit in three, four Injun wars,
Built first cabin, raised first corn,
His son Jim first baby born,
Held first preachin', fought first fight,
Uncle Johnny's 'ist a *sight*!

You'd a laffed like anything
'Ist to hear old Aunt Sue sing
Old-time love-songs fer a prize—
Good deal smother'n you'd surmise!
Make a mess of it I spec',
Tho I'll try ef it break my neck.

(*Sings.*)

As I was a-walkin' one mornin' in June,
Fer to view the fair fields an' the medders in bloom,
I met a fair damsel, she looked like a queen,
With her costly fine robes and her mantle of green.

That's as near as I kin git,
Hearin' *her* was funnier yit!
Then old Uncle Johnny got
A feller kinda heavy-sot,
Majors was his name, to play
Fiddle chunes the resta the day.
Played old Rye Straw an' Gray Eagle, (*Dances.*)
Big Piney and Shoot the Beagle.
All our feet commenced to go,
Jist as soon as he drawed his bow.

(*Sings.*)

Old Dan Tucker come to town,
Swingin' the ladies all around,
First to the right an' then to the left,
Then to the one that he loved best. (*End dancing.*)

Funny how it makes you feel,
Dancin' that old-fashioned reel—
Wish you coulda seen them folks,
Hoppin' round and crackin' jokes.
Gray old womern an' old men,
Jist as young as they'd iver been,
Never thinkin' of the sun,
Till they noticed it was gone.
And Letishy says to me
As we started hum, says she,
"Honest, honey, didn't it seem,
Old times come jist like a dream,
Old time songs and old time dances,
Old time jokes and old time prances,
Old time friends and old time eatin',
At the old time Settler's Meetin'."

(She bows and takes her seat, next to CECELIA.)

AUNT (*comes to c.*). The next number on our program (SIS HOPKINS *appears at rear of the auditorium*) is a selection —

SIS. Say, Aunt Ophely, ain't it purt' nigh time fer me to come in?

AUNT. Is that you, Sis?

SIS. Yep, here I be, sassy as a woodchuck an' twicet as handsome. (*Comes down the aisle.*)

AUNT. This little gal is Cousin Sis Hopkins from Skinny-marink Crossroads, down in Toadhunter Holler.

SIS (*skipping to the platform*). That's me, every day in the week an' a coupla times on Sunday.

AUNT. Now step out here, Sis, and act your part and don't cut up no monkey shines. (*Sits at c.*)

SIS (*leans over and speaks confidentially to the audience*). You know I'm the only one in this yere show who's a real actress. I kin sing like a bird and dance like a butterfly and act—(*pauses for a word*) and I kin act like—I kin act like —

SUKEY. A simpleton.

SIS. You hursh up, Cousin Sukey. (*To audience.*)

You know what's the matter with Sukey? She's jellix of me 'cause I'm better-lookin' ner what she is. An' I got a beau, too. Great big fat boy named Bilous Buttonbuster, weighs purt' nigh a hundred an' ninety pounds, an' ivery inch of him is love. Took me in to see the side-show last summer when the circus came to town and I snum ef they didn't try to keep him there to be the fat boy. He's a great big feller, Bilious is, weighs purt' nigh two hundred pounds. He ain't so big up and down-like but I tell you he's a whopper round in the middle. An' ivery inch of him is love. The feller in the cirkis had me sing a song fer him. I told him I'd had my voice brought out by a singing teacher; he said I'd order send it back an' keep it in cold storage. But the singin' teacher said I had an awful fine voice; she said it was so mellow. I told maw that the teacher said I had a mellow voice, and maw said, "That's right, mellow means rotten." But Bilious jest loves my voice, he says it allers makes him homesick, cause it reminds him of the hogs and things back on his farm. (*Laughs.*) Bilious has got great ideas fer sich a big feller. Oh, he's awful big, weighs purt' nigh two hundred and thirty pounds. (*Pause, then ecstatically.*) An' ivery inch of him is love. Aunt Ophely said I was to sing you-uns a song. It's a real pathetic song; folks allers cries er sump'm when I sing. Sometimes they git so wrought up they git up and go out to relieve their emotions. The song I'm a-goin' to sing is a love song. (*Giggles.*) It's Biliouses favorite. He gits so sentimental when I sing it—and do you know a fat man when he gits sentimental is sump'm awful, and Bilious weighs ivery ounce of two hundred and sixty-six pounds. (*Whispers.*) And ivery inch of him is love. I don't reckon any of you-uns has heerd this song, as it was specially wrote fer me an' no one else ever sung it. I sing it real pathetic in parts; when you see me gittin' pathetic you'll know I'm a-thinkin' of my Bilious. The name of the song is My Bonnie Lies Over the Ocean and sometimes whin I git to singin' it I git real seasick, 'cause you kin jest see the ocean and the bonnie an' iverything. Jist imagine the bonnie's name is Bilious and he weighs purt'

nigh three hundred pounds. Cousin Mollie, gimme a chord to make my bow.

(MOLLIE *plays chord*, SIS *bows*, then *sings nasally and somewhat off the key, but not too much so.*)

MY BONNIE

(*Page 43, The Golden Book.*)

My bonnie lies over the ocean, (*Gesture with R. hand.*)

My bonnie lies over the sea, (*With L. hand.*)

My bonnie lies over the ocean, (*Both hands.*)

Oh bring back my bonnie to me. (*Entreaty.*)

(*Speaks.*) Ain't that sad? I'm expressing the lacerated feelings of a gal whose tender heart has been deserted by her bonnie. (*Sings rapidly.*)

Bring back, bring back,
Bring back my bonnie to me, to me!
Bring back, bring back,
Oh, bring back my bonnie to me.

(*Speaks.*) The second spasm is even more pathetic than the first. It's the one that Bilious loves the best. Sometimes the tears come in his eyes when I sing it and he feels emotion throbbin' all through his three hundred pounds. (*Sings.*)

O blow, ye winds, over the ocean, (*Gesture to R.*)

O blow, ye winds, over the sea. (*To L.*)

O blow, ye winds, over the ocean,

And bring back my bonnie to me.

(*Slow.*) Bring back, bring back,

(*Fast.*) Bring back my bonnie to me, to me!

(*Very slow.*) Bring back, bring back,

(*Fast.*) O bring back my bonnie to me.

(*Speaks.*) Bilious took me into town once to a high-toned fashionable dance. First time in my life I'd ever

been to one of them things. I wore a peek-a-boo waist (*pause*) all trimmed with mayonaise down the front. It was a awful toney part, but they shore was skimpy on what they had to eat. Nothin' but two little skinny sandwiches and a coupla green plums. Bilious said they was olivers, tasted like salt mackerel to me. After we et we went into the ballroom. Iverybody was dancin' and some was writin' on little bits of paper who they was to dance with. I danced the first dance with Bilious. He's a lovely dancer, jest like a elephant er sump'm. And he's so big, too. Weighs purt' nigh three hundred and sixty pounds. We danced around a spell and then the music stopped and some fellers come up to ax me to dance. One of 'em says to me, "Sis, is your program full?" I axed him what he said and he said agin, "Is your program full?" I says look yere, you city dude, it takes more'n two skinny sandwiches and a couple of olivers to fill *my* program, an' don't you fergit it.

(Bows and sits in last seat.)

SUKEY (*comes to front*). We will next have a musical treat. Cousin Merindy will now flavor us with a selection.

(MERINDY appears at rear of the room singing some sweet, old-time song as she walks down the aisle. She ascends the platform and finishes the second stanza on the platform. This number should be rendered without any comic effect either by the singer or any of the other actors. If desired MERINDY may give a violin solo instead of a vocal solo. At the end of her number she sits next to SAMANTHY.)

AUNT (*comes to front*). The next number on our program —

(MA'Y JINNIE waddles to c. from behind the screen.)

MA'Y. 'Scuse me, lady, but I's jest had a accident out-

side an' I'd like de loan ob you-all's telephome jes' a minute, please, ma'am.

AUNT. Why certainly. There's the telephone.

(Points to telephone on piano and then goes and sits at c.)

MA'Y *(picks up the receiver as if afraid of it)*. Is dis yere what I talks in? *(SUKEY nods.)* You reckon dey kin hear me?

SUKEY. Of course.

MA'Y *(speaks in the ear-piece)*. Hello, is dat you, Miss Telephome?

SUKEY *(goes to her)*. No, no; hold that to your ear and talk in there.

MA'Y *(laughs)*. Lawsy, lady, is *dat* de way? I never talked in one dese yere contraptions before. I wouldn't be doin' it now, only I's had a accident. Hello, is dat you, Miss Telephome? *(Listens.)* Nawm, I didn't yere what you said. *(Listens.)* Numbah? Say, lady, I don't want to speak to no numbah. I wants to speak to Miss Car'line McTish. *(Pause.)* Huh? Don't you know Miss Car'line McTish? Lawsy, I thought ebrybody in dis yere town knowed Miss Car'line McTish. *(Gestures with her free arm.)* You know she libs down there—you go through de alley back de Methodis' Church an' you turns to yo' left, an' she libs in dat big white house what's settin' back in de cedar trees. Hello, is dat you, Miss Car'line? Yasm, dis is Ma'y Jinnie. Say, Miss Car'line, you know I started to market wif dat old mule, Maud. *(Listens.)* Huh? No'm, not mud, I means dat old mule Maud. *(Spells.)* M-o-d *(pronounces)*, Maud. She's done balked agin. Yas'm, Miss Car'line, she done balked right in front ob de Church. *(Listens.)* Yas'm, we tried dat on her. We twisted her tail. Little travellin' drummer man from Boston—he come 'long an' said de bes' way to start a balkin' mule was to twist her tail. He done it. *(Listens.)* Yas'm, he's powerful hurt, de avalanche has already done come and tooken him down to de horse-pistol. *(Listens.)* Yas'm, we tried dat on her, too.

We tied up one ob her fore-foots. Li'l preacher man, Mefodis' preacher man, he dunno what he's talkin' 'bout—he say ef you tie up a mule's fore-foot she couldn't kick. (*Laughs.*) She fool him—she had two hine ones left. She fotch him one right in de stomach. De policeman's out yere now pourin' ice-water on his haid. (*Listens.*) Yas'm, we tried dat on her, too. We tied a hoss hair round her ear an' drapped some pebbles in it. Big fat man come waddlin' along. Dunno who he was, I done forgotten his entitlements, dey's done slipped my recomembrance. He's de one dat tied de hoss hair round Maud's ear. (*Slight pause.*) Ma'am? No'm, she des' bit a li'l hunk outa his jaw, not a very big piece. I pries dat mule's mouth open and took dat hunka meat out. Doctor's out dere now stickin' it back on. Fat man, he'll git ovah it all right. (*Listens.*) Yas'm, I tole you we tried everything on her. Yas'm, we tried dat too. We started a fire under her. I got some pine kindlin' an' started a fire under Maud and when it gits close to whar she lib, she begin to wiggle herself round disaway. (*Imitates.*) And when dat fire's des' a scorchin' her stomach too much, what you reckon she done done? She des' stepped on 'bout three steps and balked again. Stopped wif de cart right ovah de fire. (*Listens.*) Yas'm, it burnt de cart a li'l bit, burnt de cart a whole lot, yas'm, dat's what I'z tryin' to tell you all de time, burnt de cart plum up, and I wants you to send down another cart right away. No'm, Maud nevah budged. She's standin' right dere now.

Enter TOPSY from behind the screen.

TOPSY. Oh, mammy, mammy!

MA'Y (*replaces the telephone*). What you want, baby?

TOPSY. You know dat ole mule Maud.

MA'Y (*laughs*). Know her? Course I knows her. Didn't I raise her?

TOPSY. She ain't balked no mo'.

MA'Y. How come she ain't?

TOPSY. Doctor man say he kin start her with a si-
ringe.

MA'Y. Wif a what?

TOPSY. He take out a little shiney thing and fill it full ob some kinda medicine. Den he shoot dat thing into Maud.

MA'Y. Shoot her? Is she daid?

TOPSY. Laws, no. She throwed back her years and run three miles down de road 'fore she knowed she'd got started.

MA'Y. Oh, lawsy. Whar's dat doctor man, honey? Whar is he? I got to hab him shoot some ob dat stuff into me.

TOPSY. How come?

MA'Y. I's got to hab him shoot me twice, kase I's jes' naturally blegged to kotch dat mule.

TOPSY. Mule run into a drug-store window and stopped her, own self. Busted de window and all de drug-store bottles. De man come leadin' her back, an' she's des' as ca'm as a li'l baby. She's waitin' for you.

AUNT (*rises*). Before you go, sit down over there (*points to chairs*) and we'll all have a grand minstrel jubilee.

MA'Y (*at R.*). Minstrel show? Lawsy, lady, lead me to it. Dere ain't nuffin' on earth dat I loves more'n a minstrel band. (*Sits at R. in first chair.*)

TOPSY. Me, too. (*Sits next to her.*)

(*Positions: reading from R. as you face the audience, MOLLIE on stool at piano, MA'Y, TOPSY, SUKEY, DELIA, SARAH, AUNT, JANE, CECELIA, SAMANTHY, MERINDY and SIS. Piano starts playing "Dixie" loudly. All characters take musical instruments from their hand-bags or baskets and play the first verse and chorus making as much noise as possible. MA'Y beats a bass drum, if possible, or plays a tambourine, SIS plays rattlebones with clapper attached, TOPSY plays tambourine, SUKEY rattlebones, the other COUSINS play instruments or toy trumpets, rattlers, squawkers, drums, etc., all standing. After a verse and chorus have been played as loudly as possible all rise and sing.*)

DIXIE LAND

(Page 64, *The Golden Book*.)

I wish I was in de land ob cotton,
Old times dere am not forgotten,
Look away, etc.
In Dixie Land whar I was born in,
Early on one frosty mornin',
Look away, etc.

Den I wish I was in Dixie, etc.

Old Missus marry Will de Weaver,
William was a gay deceiver,
Look away, etc.
But when he put his arm around her,
He smiled as fierce as a forty pounder,
Look away, etc.

Den I wish I was in Dixie, etc.

Dere's buckwheat cakes an' Injun batter,
Makes you fat or a little fatter,
Look away, etc.
Den hoe it down an' scratch your gravel,
To Dixie Land I's bound to travel,
Look away, etc.

Den I wish I was in Dixie, etc.

(Put as much noise and action in the song as possible, singing it at a very rapid tempo. MA'Y and TOPSY dance at c. Sing the last chorus slower and end with harmonized parts, if possible. At end of number all are standing. JANE and CECELIA go out during the singing behind the screen and prepare for their duet.)

AUNT (in the manner of an interlocutor in a minstrel show). Gentlemen, be seated!

MA'Y (*on her tambourine or drum*). Bing, Bing!

(*All are seated.*)

TOPSY (*to AUNT*). Say, Miss Lady, did you eber hear dat story 'bout de frosted window?

AUNT. No, Topsy, I never heard that one. What is the story about the frosted window?

TOPSY. Oh, you couldn't see through it.

SIS. Say, Aunt Ophely, I got a joke I wanta ask you. It's one of them con-onions.

AUNT. You mean a conundrum, Sis.

SIS. Yas, but I can't say conundrum, it tickles my tongue. What I want to know is why is the fourth of July?

AUNT. Why is the fourth of July what?

SIS. No what to it. Just why is the fourth of July?

AUNT. How very foolish. There can't be an answer to that. Why is the fourth of July.

SIS. Well, why is the fourth of July?

AUNT. What's the answer?

SIS. There ain't to answer at all. I just said "y" is the fourth of July. (*Spells.*) J-u-l-y. The "y" is the fourth of July.

MA'Y (*laughs loudly*). I saw a young lady down on de street yesterday cryin' like her little heart was done broke.

AUNT. Why, what had happened to her?

MA'Y. She'd jes' been in to see a fortune teller. De fortune teller told her dat her father was a hard-workin' man who shoveled coal and tended fires all day long. Den dat young lady started to weep.

AUNT. What made her weep?

MA'Y. Her father had been dead three years, and his occupation kinda worried her.

AUNT. Little Topsy Turnover will now oblige us with a minstrel song entitled ———.

(*TOPSY sings a comedy song.*)

MA'Y. Say, Miss 'Pheely, did you know I gwine to git married agin?

AUNT. Why, no, Ma'y Jinnie, I didn't even know you had an admirer.

MA'Y. Yas'm, I shore has.

AUNT. And who is he, Ma'y Jinnie?

MA'Y. Do you 'member, Miss 'Pheely, dat I attended de funeral ob a friend ob mine about two weeks ago?

AUNT. Yes, I remember.

MA'Y. Well, I'm gwine to marry de corpses husband.

SIS (*risés and stands facing audience; she commences to recite in a sing-song tone bending her knees slightly four times to each line*).

Listen to me and you shall hear,
A story of old most wondrous queer,
Of a family known both far and near
By the funny name of Umha-ha.

(*Keep up knee action.*)

MERINDY (*comes and stands beside her, bending knees with SIS and reciting in sing-song tone*).

Mr. Umha said one day
He thought he'd take the family sleigh
And ride upon the frozen snow,

SAMANTHY (*comes down*).

Mrs. Umha said she'd go,
They took the family, of course,
Including, too, the family horse.

AUNT (*joins the line*).

He was a mule, and a big one too,
You could see his ribs where the hay stuck
through.

SARAH (*comes down*).

There was Tim and Duley Umha-ha,
Rose and Julie Umha-ha,
Lizzie Minnie Umha-ha,
Big fat Jinnie Umha-ha.

DELIA.

Fourteen people in one sleigh,
They started out to spend the day.

SUKEY.

But luck will have it as it will;
When they struck the top of the hill
The hill was slippery and down they flew—
How fast they went they never knew.
The time they made it can't be beat,
The old mule had no use fer his feet.

TOPSY.

He looked like a bird or a ship in sail,
And he flew with his ears and he steered with
his tail.
'Twas a mile to the bottom and the bottom was
mud,
And they all hit the bottom with an awful thud.

(All in a straight line, facing audience and bending knees.)

MA'Y.

Tim and Duley they was crazed,
Rose and Julie they was dazed,
Lizzie Minnie bumped her nose,
Big fat Jinnie, she was froze.

SIS.

Fourteen doctors come from town.

MERINDY.

They buried the mule down under ground.

AUNT.

They gave little Tim a dish of chowder,

SARAH.

They gave fat Jinnie a Seidlitz powder.

DELIA.

They put Mr. Duley away in bed,

SUKEY.

Put a mustard plaster on Jinnie's head.

TOPSY.

But four days later they were well, ha, ha!

MA'Y.

And this is the tale of the Umha-ha!

*(All march to their seats singing, "Auld Lang Syne."
Page 57, The Golden Book.)*

The Umha-ha's all fell down hill,
But still they laughed, Ha, ha!
So let us all be merry still,
Like the funny Umha-ha!

(All seated, except AUNT. AUNT introduces MERINDY, who gives a vocal or violin solo; or a female quartet may render a ballad at this point.)

SIS. I wanta tell you all sump'm. It's about my beau Bilious. You know Bilious Buttonbuster, don't you? Big, fat feller, weighs purt' nigh three hundred and ninety pounds —

AUNT. Sis, you hush up, if you can't talk about nothin' else better than that beau of yours. We're all sick of hearin' about him.

SIS. Jellix!

AUNT *(sniffs)*. Jealous, the idea! I wouldn't marry the best man living.

SIS. You couldn't git Bilious.

AUNT. I wouldn't want him.

SIS. He's a wonderful feller.

AUNT. I wouldn't have him as a gift.

SIS. He's so good-natured.

AUNT. He has to be; he can't run and he's too fat to fight.

SIS. He ain't so awful fat. He's just bone and muscle.

AUNT. Yes, he's bone from the neck up, solid ivory.

SIS. And he weighs purt' nigh four hundred pounds, and ivery inch of him is love.

AUNT. You hush up talkin' about sich foolishness.

SIS. All right. I won't say another word.

AUNT. See that you don't.

SIS. He's an only child, Bilious is.

AUNT. We don't want to hear no more about Bilious.

SIS. He come to serenade me the other night.

AUNT. That's enough.

SIS. He sang "Come, Birdie, Come," and the next morning he got arrested for stealing chickens. Bilious said —

AUNT. The next number on our program —

SIS. I was goin' to tell you what Bilious said —

AUNT. If you can't keep still, we'll put you where you can. Samantha, you put Sis Hopkins back of the screen.

SAMANTHY (*goes to SIS*). Come on, child.

(*Leads her to screen.*)

SIS. Everybody picks on me, 'kase I'm so cute, and you're all jellix, 'cause Bilious is my beau. You know him, Cousin Samantha? Great big feller, weighs purt' nigh four hundred and forty pounds, and every inch of him is love.

(SAMANTHY *puts her back of screen*. SAMANTHY *resumes her seat*.)

SUKEY (*rises*). Our next number introduces our two famous twins, the Comicalest Country Cousins outa captivity. They each got one of these new-fangled one-button dresses and when they put 'em on they got so twisted lookin' backwards that they never got untwisted, so you'll have to take 'em twist and all. (*Sits.*)

(*Music, "Auld Lang Syne," played rather fast in march time. JANE and CECELIA march in from rear, CECELIA walking backwards. They march to front and nod at audience on a given note, then go through arm calisthenics while the piano plays eight bars. The audience should not suspect the "double" natures of the girls until they turn around. After the calisthenics they sing.*)

We're the Country Cousin Twins,
You can't tell one from t'other;
We act alike and dress alike,
And look jest like our mother.

(*Piano repeats the music of the verse while the two girls step in time. JANE puts her R. foot to R. on first beat corresponding to the word "we're" in the preceding verse. She then draws L. foot to R. and*

on "Cous" puts R. foot to R. again, and draws L. foot to it on "Twins." Repeat the same steps for second line. On third and fourth line work back to original position in the same way. CECELIA does the same steps with her back to the audience. No singing during the stepping. Then JANE sings alone, both gesturing.)

My name is Jane, I'm awful sweet,
 Cecelia is my sister;
 We both have exercised so much
 That each one is a twister.

(Piano repeats music of the verse. On the first two lines the girls bow four times, bending at the waist, JANE bowing to the front, CECELIA to back. On the last two lines they swing around, bringing JANE facing rear and CECELIA front. CECELIA sings.)

We're two sweet girls, as you can see:
 You can't tell how we're going;
 No matter on which side you look,
 We're bound to make a showing.

(Piano repeats music. Girls face each other, clasp right hands and balance forward and back, then twirl—leaving JANE facing front and CECELIA the rear. JANE sings.)

We're looking for two nice young men,
 Speak up, boys, do not falter;
 Just raise your hands if you would like
 To lead us to the altar.

(Piano repeats music. Girls spread skirts and dance forward and back to audience, then around, leaving CECELIA facing front. She sings.)

I'm sure we'd make two charming brides,
 A going or a coming;
 So, wake up, boys, don't be afraid,
 Let's start the music humming.

(*Music repeats as girls do Virginia Reel steps, facing each other. Forward and back, forward and swing, do-see-do, etc. At close JANE faces front and sings.*)

I want a man who's good and true,
I'll please him with my cooking.

CECELIA (*swings round and sings*).

Oh, she can cook, but honest, boys,
I'm much the better looking.

(*Music repeats. JANE kneels, back to audience, CECELIA dances around her. Then both face front and sing.*)

Although we're full of jollity,
I'm sure you boys can tame us;
Now Johnny Sells and Walter Jones,
Come on up here and claim us.

(*Substitute local names for the ones mentioned. JANE and CECELIA resume seats.*)

AUNT. We will close our program by singing "America, the Beautiful."

(*All rise, produce small American flags and sing "America, the Beautiful," page 91, The Golden Book. At the end of the song, SIS enters from behind screen dressed in army overcoat, army hat and carrying large American flag. She poses at c., surrounded by the others. All sing "When Johnny Comes Marching Home," page 126, The Golden Book, and march out through the audience and disappear at back of the audience-room.*)

NOTE.—The music and songs called for in the text may be found in The Golden Book of Favorite Songs, 25 cts.; for sale by Walter H. Baker Co., 5 Hamilton Place, Boston 9, Mass.

LUCINDA SPEAKS

A Comedy in Two Acts

By Gladys Ruth Bridgman

Eight women. Scene, an interior; costumes, modern. Plays an hour and a quarter. Isabel Jewett has dropped her homely middle name, Lucinda, and with it many sterling traits of character, and is not a very good mother to the daughter of her husband over in France. But circumstances bring "Lucinda" to life again with wonderful results. A pretty and dramatic contrast that is very effective. Well recommended.

Price, 25 cents

CHARACTERS

ISABEL JEWETT, *aged 27.*

MIRIAM, *her daughter, aged 7.*

MRS. MCBIERNEY, *aged 50.*

TESSIE FLANDERS, *aged 18.*

MRS. DOUGLAS JEWETT, *aged 45.*

HELEN, *her daughter, aged 20.*

MRS. FOGG, *aged 35.*

FLORENCE LINDSEY, *aged 25.*

SYNOPSIS

ACT I.—Dining-room in Isabel Jewett's tenement, Roxbury, October, 1918.

ACT II.—The same—three months later.

WRONG NUMBERS

A Triologue Without a Moral

By Essex Dane

Three women. Scene, an interior; unimportant. Costumes, modern. Plays twenty minutes. Royalty, \$5.00. An intensely dramatic episode between two shop-lifters in a department store, in which "diamond cuts diamond" in a vividly exciting and absorbingly interesting battle of wits. A great success in the author's hands in War Camp work, and recommended in the strongest terms. A really powerful little play.

Price, 25 cents

FLEURETTE & CO.

A Duologue in One Act

By Essex Dane

Two women. Scene, an interior; costumes, modern. Plays twenty minutes. Royalty, \$5.00. Mrs. Paynter, a society lady who does not pay her bills, by a mischance puts it into the power of a struggling dress-maker, professionally known as "Fleurette & Co.," to teach her a valuable lesson and, incidentally, to collect her bill. A strikingly ingenious and entertaining little piece of strong dramatic interest, strongly recommended.

Price, 25 cents

NO TRESPASSING

A Play in Three Acts

By Evelyn Gray Whiting

Six males, five females. Costumes, modern; scenery, a single easy interior. Plays two hours. Free of royalty. Lisle Irving, a lively "city girl," goes down into the country on a vacation and to get rid of a husband of her father's choice whom she has never seen, and runs into the very man living there under another name. He meets her by accident and takes her to be one of a pair of twins who have been living at the farmhouse. She discovers his mistake and in the character of both twins in alternation gives him the time of his life, incidentally falling in love with him. An unusual abundance of good comedy characters, including one—Bill Meader—of great originality and humor, sure to make a big hit. Strongly recommended.

Price, 35 cents

CHARACTERS

BILL MEADER, "*on the town.*"

JIM MEADER, son of Bill, a boy of sixteen to eighteen.

MR. PALMER, a New England farmer.

CLEVELAND TOWER, a young city fellow, guest of Raynor.

HERBERT EDMAND RAYNOR, a young Englishman.

MR. IRVING, father of Lisle.

LISLE IRVING, a girl of seventeen.

PEGGY PALMER, a girl of eighteen or twenty.

MRS. PALMER, Peggy's mother.

BARBARA PALMER, a girl of ten or twelve years.

ALMEDA MEADER, a girl about Barbara's age.

THE GIRL UP-STAIRS

A Comedy in Two Acts

By Gladys Ruth Bridgham

Seven females. Costumes, modern; scenery, an interior. Plays an hour. Daisy Jordan, crazy to get "on the stage," comes to New York and starves there in a lodging house waiting for her chance. She schemes to get an interview with Cicely Denver, a popular actress, to act before her, but the result is not at all what she intended. A capital play with strong and ingenious opportunities for good acting. Recommended.

Price, 25 cents

TICKETS, PLEASE!

A Comedy in One Act

By Irving Dale

Four females. Costumes, modern and fashionable; scenery, an interior, not important. Plays twenty minutes. Mignon asks Charlotte to get the theatre tickets, Charlotte asks Maude to get them, Maude hands over three to Linda, who leaves two at Mignon's house after she has left home. But they get to the theatre somehow. Bright, funny and characteristic. Strongly recommended.

Price, 25 cents

CAMP FIDELITY GIRLS

A Comedy in Four Acts

By Edith Lowell

*Dramatized by permission from the well-known story by
Annie Hamilton Donnell*

One male, eleven females. Scenery, two interiors. Plays two hours. A jolly party of girls occupy an old farmhouse for the summer and there discover a secret that makes for the happiness and prosperity of a poor little cripple. A very "human" piece full of brightness and cheer and with a great variety of good parts.

Price, 35 cents

CHARACTERS

BARBARA WETHERELL

JUDY WETHERELL, *her sister*

JESSICA THAYER

MARY SHEPHERD, *otherwise Plain Mary*

EDNA HULL

MRS. TUCKER, *a next-door neighbor.*

JOHNNIE TUCKER, *known as Johnnie-Son.*

BARNABY CAMPBELL, *a big child.*

JENNIE BRETT, *a country girl.*

COUSIN SALOME.

AUNT ELIZABETH.

UNCLE JEFF.

*students at
Hatton Hall School.*

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

ACT I. Room at Hatton Hall School.

ACT II. *Scene I.* Camp Fidelity. Afternoon. *Scene II.* The next morning.

ACT III. *Scene I.* Same. Two weeks later. *Scene II.* Midnight.

ACT IV. *Scene I.* Same. Six weeks later. *Scene II.* A half hour later.

MARRYING MONEY

A Play in One Act

By Alice L. Tildesley

Four females. Scene, an interior. Plays half an hour. The girls seek a job with the millionaire's mother and one of them gets one for life with the millionaire. One eccentric character and three straight.

Price, 25 cents

THE OVER-ALLS CLUB

A Farce in One Act

By Helen Sherman Griffith

Ten females. Scene, an interior. Plays half an hour. The "Over-Alls Club" meets for the first time in its denim costume with enthusiasm for economy that only lasts until young Dr. Ellery is announced. Finishes in pretty gowns.

Price, 25 cents

THE CONJURER

A Dramatic Mystery in Three Acts

By Mansfield Scott

Author of "The Submarine Shell," "The Air-Spy," etc.

Eight male, four female characters. Costumes, modern; scenery, two easy interiors. Plays a full evening. Royalty for amateur performance, \$10.00 for the first and \$5.00 each for subsequent performances by the same company. Free for school performance. George Clifford, incapacitated for service at the front, employs his great talents as a conjurer to raise money for the soldiers. He is utilized by Inspector Steele, of the U. S. Secret Service, in a plan to discover certain foreign spies. The plan goes wrong and involves seven persons in suspicion of a serious crime. Clifford's clever unravelling of this tangled skein constitutes the thrilling plot of this play, the interest of which is curiously like that of the popular "Thirteenth Chair." This is not a "war-play" save in a very remote and indirect way, but a clever detective story of absorbing interest. Strongly recommended.

Price, 35 cents

CHARACTERS

INSPECTOR MALCOLME STEELE.	DRISCOLL WELLS.
GEORGE CLIFFORD.	DOCTOR GORDON PEAK.
CAPTAIN FRANK DRUMMOND	DETECTIVE WHITE.
GLEASON.	MARION ANDERSON.
LIEUTENANT HAMILTON WAR-	EDITH ANDERSON.
WICK.	ELLEN GLEASON.
COLONEL WILLARD ANDERSON.	DOROTHY ELMSTROM.

SYNOPSIS

ACT I.—The home of Colonel Anderson (Friday evening).

ACT II.—The office of Inspector Steele (Saturday afternoon).

ACT III.—The same as Act II (Saturday evening).

THE OTHER VOICE

A Play in One Act

By S. vK. Fairbanks

Three voices, preferably male, are employed in this little novelty which is intended to be presented upon a dark stage upon which nothing is actually visible save starlight. It was originally produced at Workshop 47, Cambridge, where its effective distillation of the essential oil of tragedy was curiously successful. An admirable item for any programme seeking variety of material and effect. Naturally no costumes nor scenery are required, save a drop carrying stars and possibly a city sky-line. Plays ten minutes only; royalty, \$5.00.

Price, 25 cents

Plays for Junior High Schools

	Males	Females	Time	Price
Sally Lunn	3	4	1½ hrs.	25c
Mr. Bob	3	4	1½ "	25c
The Man from Brandon	3	4	½ "	25c
A Box of Monkeys	2	3	1¼ "	25c
A Rice Pudding	2	3	1¼ "	25c
Class Day	4	3	¾ "	25c
Chums	3	2	¾ "	25c
An Easy Mark	5	2	½ "	25c
Pa's New Housekeeper	3	2	1 "	25c
Not On the Program	3	3	¾ "	25c
The Cool Collegians	3	4	1½ "	25c
The Elopement of Ellen	4	3	2 "	35c
Tommy's Wife	3	5	1½ "	35c
Johnny's New Suit	2	5	¾ "	25c
Thirty Minutes for Refreshments	4	3	½ "	25c
West of Omaha	4	3	¾ "	25c
The Flying Wedge	3	5	¾ "	25c
My Brother's Keeper	5	3	1½ "	25c
The Private Tutor	5	3	2 "	35c
Me an' Otis	5	4	2 "	25c
Up to Freddie	3	6	1¼ "	25c
My Cousin Timmy	2	8	1 "	25c
Aunt Abigail and the Boys	9	2	1 "	25c
Caught Out	9	2	1½ "	25c
Constantine Pueblo Jones	10	4	2 "	35c
The Cricket On the Hearth	6	7	1½ "	25c
The Deacon's Second Wife	6	6	2 "	35c
Five Feet of Love	5	6	1½ "	25c
The Hurdy Gurdy Girl	9	9	2 "	35c
Camp Fidelity Girls	1	11	2 "	35c
Carrotty Nell		15	1 "	25c
A Case for Sherlock Holmes		10	1½ "	35c
The Clancey Kids		14	1 "	25c
The Happy Day		7	½ "	25c
I Grant You Three Wishes		14	½ "	25c
Just a Little Mistake	1	5	¾ "	25c
The Land of Night		18	1¼ "	25c
Local and Long Distance	1	6	½ "	25c
The Original Two Bits		7	½ "	25c
An Outsider		7	½ "	25c
Oysters		6	½ "	25c
A Pan of Fudge		6	½ "	25c
A Peck of Trouble		5	½ "	25c
A Precious Pickle		7	½ "	25c
The First National Boot	7	2	1 "	25c
His Father's Son	14		1¼ "	35c
The Turn In the Road	9		1½ "	25c
A Half Back's Interference	10		¾ "	25c
The Revolving Wedge	5	3	1 "	25c
Mose	11	10	1½ "	25c

BAKER, Hamilton Place, Boston, Mass.

Recent Plays That Have "Gone Over the Top"

	Males	Females	Time	Price	Royalty
The Adventures of Grandpa	4	5	2 hrs.	35c	Free
Turning the Trick	6	5	2 1/4	35c	"
The American Flag	6	3	2	35c	"
Captain Cranberry	8	3	2	35c	"
Mr. Kelley from Kalamazoo	8	3	2	35c	"
If I Only Had a Million	7	6	2	35c	"
The Country Doctor	6	5	2	35c	"
Country Folks	6	5	2	35c	"
A Couple of Million	6	5	2	35c	\$10.00
Cranberry Corners	6	6	2	35c	Free
Five Feet of Love	5	6	1 1/2	25c	"
Alias Brown	11	5	2	35c	"
Expense No Object	10	3	2	35c	"
The Heiress Hunters	7	7	2 1/4	35c	"
Picking a Winner	9	5	2	35c	"
Elizabeth's Young Man	1	3	1/2	25c	"
Freddy Goes to College	4	2	3/4	25c	"
A Full House	3	3	1/2	25c	"
The Girl From Upper Seven	10	11	2	35c	"
Grandma Gibbs of the Red Cross	8	9	2	35c	"
Honeymoon Flats	6	8	1 1/2	25c	"
Plain People	5	5	2	35c	"
Red Acre Farm	7	5	2	35c	"
Johnny's New Suit	2	5	3/4	25c	"
Local and Long Distance	1	6	1/2	25c	"
The Sisterhood of Bridget	7	6	2	35c	"
The Loving Cup	4	9	1/2	35c	\$5.00
The Guest Retainer	5	3	2	35c	Free
Old Days in Dixie	5	8	2 1/4	35c	\$10.00
Mrs. Briggs of the Poultry Yard	4	7	2	35c	Free
Much Ado About Betty	10	12	2	35c	"
No Trespassing	6	5	2	35c	"
Our Wives	7	4	2	35c	"
Pa's New Housekeeper	3	2	3/4	25c	"
And Billy Disappeared	5	6	2 1/4	60c	\$10.00
The Rebellion of Mrs. Barclay	3	6	1 3/4	35c	Free
When a Feller Needs a Friend	5	5	2 1/4	35c	\$10.00
Allison Makes Hay	7	7	2	60c	\$15.00
The Slacker	2	7	3/4	25c	Free
The Arrival of Kitty	5	4	2	60c	\$10.00
Six Miles From a Lemon	6	4	2	60c	\$10.00
Teddy, or The Runaways	4	4	2 1/4	35c	Free
The Man Who Went	7	3	2	35c	\$10.00
The Troubling of Bethesda Pool	2	12	3/4	25c	Free
Valley Farm	6	6	2 1/2	35c	"
The Village School Ma'am	6	5	2	35c	"
Willowdale	7	5	2 1/4	35c	"
The Country Minister	8	5	2	35c	"
The Cuckoo's Nest	3	3	1/2	25c	"
Petrel, The Storm Child	8	5	2	25c	"

BAKER, Hamilton Place, Boston, Mass.

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